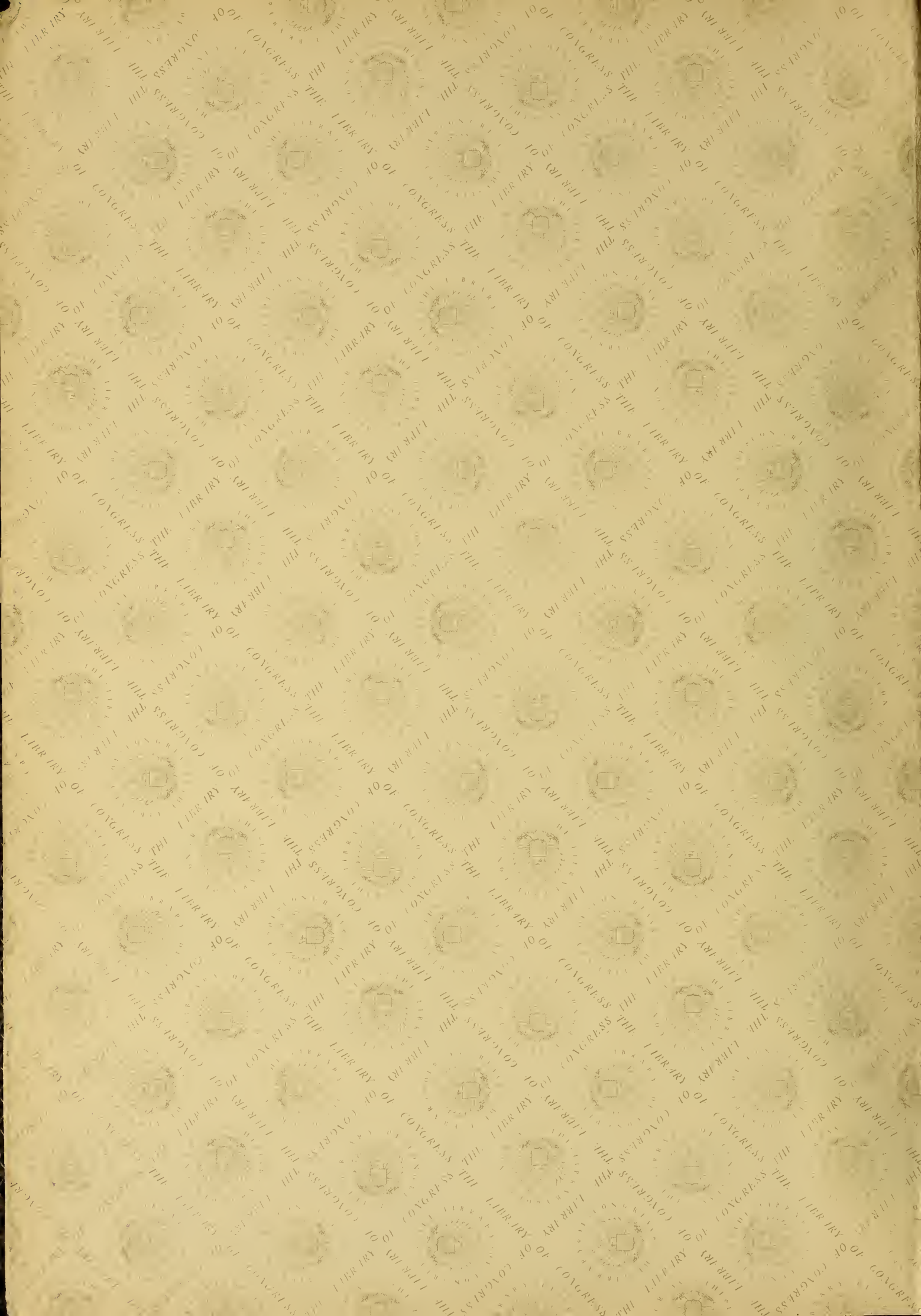


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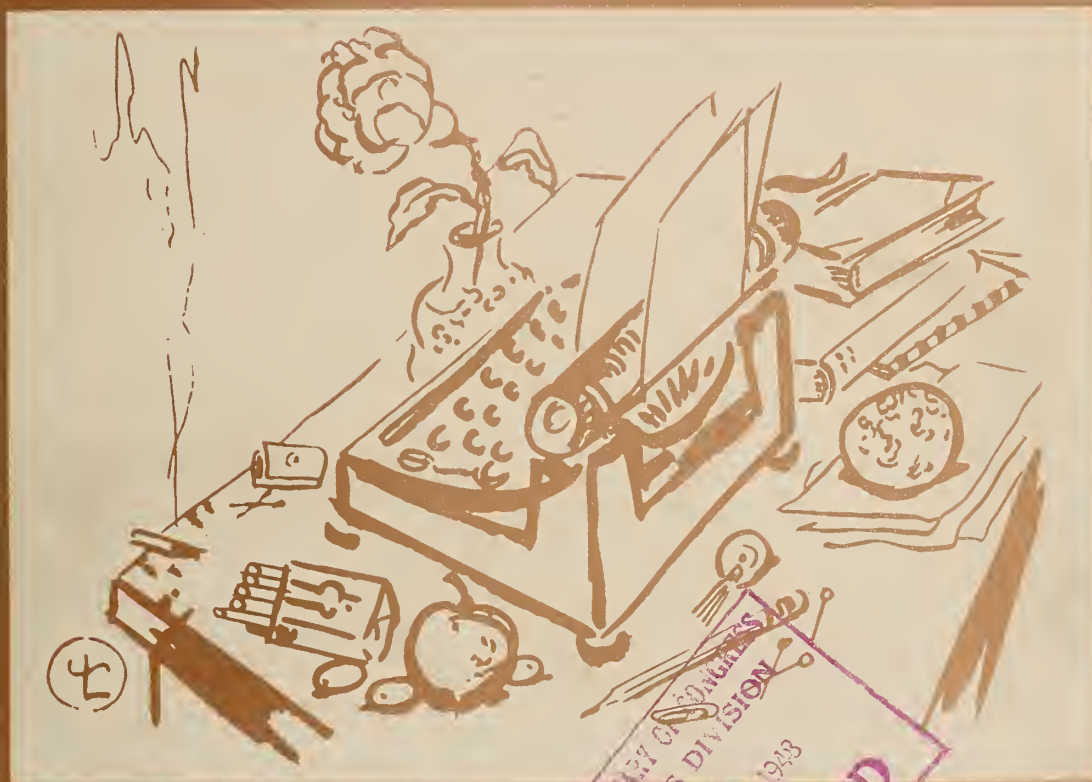
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15th Anniversary of the Screen Writers' Guild . . . Page 18

The Screen Writer



UNEMPLOYMENT IV: What IS A Screen Writer? By ERNEST PASCHI

GOVERNOR EARL WARREN • F. HUGH HERBERT • ROBERT H. ROSEN
SAMUEL GOLDWYN • SHERIDAN GIBNEY • OSCAR HANCOCK
DAVID CHANDLER • WILLIAM KOZLENKO • FREDERICK MARSHALL
MARY C. McCALL, JR. • FREDERICK MARSHALL



Gunn Shots

By JAMES GUNN

HOLLYWOOD, the gentle gangster, in the face of slander or ridicule not only turns the other cheek but puts out its hand to be slapped and its behind to be kicked. Thus the old-hat canards go undenied through the years, to the big hilarity of everyone east of Los Feliz Boulevard.

One of the most persistent mothballs, minor but irksome, is the one that can be labelled "The Hollywood Caste System," or "Strata Among the Stars." The origins of this venerable nonsense are lost in the mists of time, but the myth refuses to die. Just a while ago Hollywood got a blast along this line from the eminent British magazine writer, Mr. James Mason. And more recently we had a definitive account from Miss Lillian Ross of *The New Yorker*. I do not mean to disparage Miss Ross, who is, after all, primarily a humorist rather than a reporter. She is a lady with a fine talent for selection, and, I suspect, a nice flair for purely creative writing. And she talks through a very witty hat.

To quote the lady: "This (Hollywood) is still a special area where . . . guests at parties are chosen from lists based on their weekly income brackets — low (\$200-\$500), middle (\$500-\$1,250), and upper (\$1,250-\$20,000)."

(Oh, the hell with it, write this paragraph yourself. Any four-letter word signifying a loud horselaugh will do.)

In the first place, the above implies that in more doughtily democratic American centers, the bank president thinks nothing of entertaining at one blow a visiting senator, a junior clerk, several millhands, and his wife's sister, who married badly. In the second, as far as Hollywood goes, it just ain't

(Continued on Page 37)

The Screen Writer

Vol. 3, No. 11

APRIL, 1948

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An Anniversary Message

California is proud to call itself the home of the Motion Picture Industry. Until recently motion pictures were California's largest peace-time industrial export and added greatly to the nation's favorable balance of trade. Almost 90% of the total of national expenditures for film production was made in this state.

More important, however, than the significant contribution which the Motion Picture Industry is making to the welfare of our economy is its influence upon our culture. It is giving to the American people, in fact to the people of the free world, an interpretation and appreciation of the traditions, customs and manner of living of all nations. It has become recognized as a forceful medium for the advancement of international relationships.

In these troubled days when the establishment of world peace has become the goal of all mankind America is fortunate in possessing an industry so skilled in portraying our democratic way of life. It is unbelievable that a system of totalitarianism can survive in any country when its people have become acquainted with democratic process. Through faithful portrayals of the individual freedoms and the opportunities which are characteristic to our way of life every person in the Motion Picture Industry is contributing not only to his own nation's welfare, but to the cause of peace throughout the world.

Governor Earl Warren

Unemployment IV

The screen writer usually views the problem of employment in the most personal sense—as he should. Employment is the producer who likes your work, and the one who doesn't; the agent who is right on top of the ball and the one we had before—who couldn't sell Louis B. Mayer his own mother; the studio that leaps to buy one of our originals, and those other alleged studios that don't know a good story when they see one. That's what unemployment means to most of us: a constant striving for some degree of security in a business—or art form, if you wish—which can never be secure. For pictures, despite the dreams and words that we breathe into them, are but the shadows on a screen, a voice in the air.

But our careers are, more than we realize, in hands other than the producers, agents, and story heads. The largest studio is frequently but a beachhead of some vast holding empire. The studios represent Investment—and nameless faces on distant Boards of Directors every day in the week make decisions that affect us personally. One of the unfortunate plights of screen writers is that a board member of an airplane company has no real interest in any one airplane, even though his own company makes it. And when the same attitude prevails in pictures, made not by mechanics just doing a job but by men and women who feel that each story is some vital part of themselves, that their own hopes and dignity are in their signatures on that picture, someone is going to get hurt. And it won't be the Board of Directors.

This month however, employment is up a bit. 22 more writers are employed in April than in March. The breakdown shows 252 writers in the major studios, and 185 in the independents, for a total of 437.

Now, Ernest Pascal takes us into that realm we occasionally hear of but never know too much about: Big business, and the manner and methods by which it affects our everyday employment.

. EDITOR

What IS A Screen Writer?

ERNEST PASCAL

ERNEST PASCAL, President of the SWG for two terms, 1935-1936, member of the present Executive Board, is Chairman of the Guild's Economic Committee.

FROM the close-range viewpoint the economic status of the screen writer is bad and getting worse. Employment is low, about forty per cent of active Screen Writers' Guild membership. Wages that were frozen during the war years have never been increased generally as in almost all other industries, and in the face of living costs that have practically doubled since 1938. From the not so close-range viewpoint the economic status of the screen writer is good and getting better — much, much better.

This diametric divergence of viewpoints rests upon two factors: what is a screen writer, and what is the Motion Picture Industry.

A screen writer is a dramatist — a

writer peculiarly gifted in the art of presenting human beings and life experience in concrete terms. His talent is unique and is not to be confounded with the talent of the poet, the novelist, the journalist, or the advertising writer.

His market place, also uniquely his own, is the stage, and the fact that the form of the stage has changed from the Greek amphitheatre to the steps of the cathedral to the balcony and pit of the Elizabethans to the motion picture screen to the air waves of the radio and finally to the screen over the air waves of television make it no less the dramatist's stage.

The motion picture industry that controls his stage is a real estate combine of two billion dollars of invested

capital. Ninety-four per cent of this sum is invested in land, or leases on land, upon which rise the twenty thousand motion picture theatres of the United States. Six per cent, or only one hundred and twenty million dollars, is represented in the motion picture studios and the tools used in the actual manufacture of motion picture films.

These figures, taken from the United States Department of Commerce of 1938, are minimum and ten years old, but they are accurate enough for our purpose and are essential to keep in the back of one's head in order to have a real understanding of what this movie business really is.

And incidentally (because it is dangerous these days to bandy about

such un-American words as "combine") there is no attack implied on this real estate combine, or of labelling it necessarily a monopoly. That does not interest us here. If the twenty thousand theatres, aggregating eleven million seats, were owned by twenty thousand individuals, the result to the screen playwright would be basically the same. Competition for product would be greater, no doubt, but under such a highly competitive system the cost of selling and distributing pictures would be increased, so that the net profits would probably be the same.

WHAT does concern us is the simple fact that the screen playwright's stage is contained in these twenty thousand theatres. They are there for keeps—twenty thousand of them, blazoning their fronts on every Broadway of every city and village of the United States, with displays costing hundreds of thousands of dollars to entice the public inside to occupy those eleven million seats. They are useless for anything other than the showing of motion pictures. They cannot be turned into skating rinks, abattoirs or public service stations. They are one-purpose buildings, expensive to maintain, and dependent upon only one commodity to maintain them—motion picture entertainment. A commodity, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, as intangible as a shadow on the wall, a sound in the air.

The combine is concerned with only one consideration—the renting of those eleven million seats, and how many hours per day and night each seat is occupied. That is its sole business. That is the Motion Picture Industry. It has no heart, no sentiment, no culture, no interest whatsoever in art, literature or humanitarianism. It shouldn't be expected to have, any more than bricks and mortar and steel care about what they are holding up—a garage roof or a church steeple. The Industry is divinely objective. It is impervious to isms, morals, politics, religion, or Leagues of Decency. It is impervious to stars, stories, production values, and indeed all the things that most of us in Holly-

wood spend most of our time thinking and talking about. All the combine demands—a simple enough request for the two billion dollars invested!—is that the commodity it deals in tickles the fancies of some eighty-five million people a day and excites their emotions and libidos sufficiently to goose them into going inside. If dear old Lassie does the trick, then an hermaphroditic collie is the world's greatest actor, and the author of Lassie's script looms larger than the Bard of Avon.

And that is how it should be.

The Hollywood studios are in exactly the same position. They are merely the manufacturers of the commodity that the combine purveys and must have in order to keep going. The heads of the studios, regardless of what personal artistic ambitions they may possess, are merely the servants of the combine. They are hired to turn out the necessary product. If they fail, regardless of why, they are quickly dismissed and superseded by some other manufacturing dynamo. This has always been self-evident. It was conclusively demonstrated, via the Eric Johnston statement over the Rankin-Thomas hearings in its recent investigation of the Motion Picture Industry. The Hollywood producers determined upon a decent and intelligent course of action, but under the alleged duress of Public Opinion, they were forced to adopt a completely opposite stand—and ordered to set up an industrial court, thereby contravening the laws of the land, wherein motion picture employees could be judged and convicted of the "crime" of holding certain political opinions. The only alternative the studio heads had was to lose their jobs. It is no wonder they capitulated, and no blame should be attached to their acquiescence. They were not employed in the first place to be concerned with political or humanitarian principles. There was no reason why they should undermine their jobs and ruin their careers over a situation that they neither created nor had any say in settling. Their allegiance was to the combine, and the concern of the combine was Public Opinion — as the combine interpreted it, rightly or wrongly.

THIS does not imply, of course, that the studio heads and the producers as *individuals* are not personally and individually deeply concerned with motion pictures as an art, as literature, and as the greatest force in the world for moral and spiritual progress. Over the years many producers have made heroic efforts to foist fine pictures upon the American public. Once in a lifetime these have proved successful, but the majority have failed dismally — and the producer has had to take the blame. He is blamed in fact for most of the ills of the Motion Picture Industry—the so-called twelve year old mentality, picture formulas, high costs, poor product, while the truth of the matter is that he is completely blameless. He is merely the pawn of a robot calculating machine which he tries valiantly and honestly to serve.

This real estate relationship to the dramatist's stage is nothing new. It is merely an extension, on a much larger scale, of the theatre combine formerly owned and controlled by the Shuberts, Frohmans, Dillinghams, and Erlangers. That combine was no whit more interested in culture or literary ideals than Loews Inc., Publix Paramount, or Warner Freres. Its interest was solely the income derived from renting out theatre stalls. It operated in precisely the same manner, even to the star system. The stars of those days — the Mansfields, the Terrys, the perennial Barrymores — were employed under yearly contract to the theatre owners. Dramatists were engaged to devise "vehicles" to exploit the star's special talents. Only incidentally and in spite of the system did playwrights essay good and literary play writing.

There were, however, two important differences between the playwright of the theatre and the playwright of the screen.

In the theatre, the dramatist was always considered extremely important. His name became known, and he grew in fame and fortune. The screen playwright has only just begun to be considered important. So far, none is known. In the thirty years of movies not one single name has achieved any degree of importance.

The only people who can even mention the names of half a dozen screen writers are the movie reviewers and the Hollywood columnists. To the movie goer the screen playwright is a complete anonymity. It can be argued of course that the screen writer is seldom a creative artist, or the author of the original material, that his job consists merely of adapting the creations of others. But even the original authors are not known to the public as are the authors of plays or books. Their names have been carefully expurgated.

The second, the more important difference, is the manner in which the dramatist of the theatre was rewarded.

He was never an employee. He was an independent contractor, investing his time and talents in his plays and leasing them to an entrepreneur on a royalty basis. With the advent of pictures, or when the screen became the dramatist's stage, this royalty form of remuneration was abandoned in favor of a salary. The screen dramatist hired out his talents for a stipulated sum per week and accepted the status

of an employee. The entrepreneur preferred it that way, believing it the only practical manner in which to operate. The screen writer preferred it that way, too, because in those early days the writer was only the director's appendage, and was in truth little more than an adapter. But even on this basis he received a relatively high rate of compensation compared to the pay of a newspaper man, let us say.

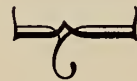
This difference between employee and independent contractor is of extreme importance. It strikes at the very heart of the screen writer's economic status.

The employee status works no longer to the best advantage of either entrepreneur or screen playwright, neither from a dollars and cents point of view or in the interest of better pictures. From a dollars and cents point of view it impels the producer to employ writer upon writer until the producer succeeds in getting a producer's script. This automatically places the producer in the position of the author, a role which he is generically unfitted to assume. Under the inspiration of a mere "showman,"

torn to shreds by front office criticism, rebuilt by "experience" and "story experts," the end result can inevitably be only a patchwork of rote, rule, rehash and reminiscence. When better pictures are made they will be better written by better writers.

Better writers will never be employees. The very status of employee is damaging to the writer. It automatically divests him of his writer's responsibility, both to himself and to his public. When he writes it demolishes that indefinable link between writer and public. It robs him in the end of his essential individuality, his most precious asset.

So for the screen writer who is only an adapter, with only his screen playwriting technique to warrant his usefulness, and who prefers to remain an employee, with the apparent security such a relationship affords, the future is not so rosy. For the screen playwright who holds the motion picture screen as his modern stage, and is an honest and creative artist, and who demands the freedoms necessary for creative writing, the future looms rosy indeed.



The Credit Union Committee Reports:

Our next general membership meeting will also be the organization meeting of the Screen Writers' Federal Credit Union, Inc.

The United States government, which requires that all Federal credit unions shall be organized and launched into business under the supervision of its officials, will be represented by Mr. Sam Mitchell of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which as already granted our charter.

Under its liberal provisions as drawn by Mr. Mitchell, all members and employees of the Screen Writers' Guild, and their immediate families, are eligible for membership in the Screen Writers' Federal Credit Union.

The principal business of the organization meeting will be the election of a board of directors, a credit committee, and a supervisory committee. Under these officials, our credit union will then become a going concern.

Meanwhile, your committee is preparing a fully detailed credit union report, including the accumulated experience of studio credit unions, and the helpful advice of Mr. Sam Mitchell and Mr. Gurden Farr, President of the Executive Committee of the Credit Union National Association, over 12,000 credit unions extending from Puerto Rico to Hawaii, from British Honduras to Newfoundland.

"Your Screen Writers' Federal Credit Union represents one of the most salient advances ever made in our movement," said Mr. Farr, "because it will be the pioneer in a new field of possible expansion—the first credit union to serve a professional talent group."

JACK NATTEFORD, Chairman

Attention: Grievance Committee

F. HUGH HERBERT

F. HUGH HERBERT, a Vice President of the Executive Board, is the distinguished playwright of Kiss And Tell and the current Broadway hit, For Love Or Money.

WESTERN UNION

April 10, 1948

Screen Writers Guild

1655 No. Cherokee

Hollywood 28, California

PLEASE NOTIFY ME IMMEDIATELY WHAT STEPS I MUST TAKE TO FILE GRIEVANCE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST A FELLOW MEMBER OF THE SCREEN WRITERS GUILD STOP THE MATTER IS EXTREMELY URGENT STOP I ALREADY CONTEMPLATE CIVIL ACTION AGAINST THIS PARTY BUT I HAVE BEEN PAYING DUES TO THE SCREEN WRITERS GUILD FOR OVER SIX YEARS AND I WANT THE GUILD TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT STOP MY TEMPORARY ADDRESS IS LINCOLN HEIGHTS JAIL, LOS ANGELES.

Walter P. Zilch

SCREEN WRITERS GUILD

1655 No. Cherokee

Hollywood 28, California

April 10, 1948

Mr. Walter P. Zilch

Lincoln Heights Jail

Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Mr. Zilch:

The procedure for filing grievance proceedings is very simple. You should give a complete and detailed account of your alleged grievance in a letter to the Executive Board. The Board will then consider your complaint on its merits and at its discretion will refer the matter to the Grievance Committee.

Very truly yours,
Alice Penneman
Executive Secretary

LINCOLN HEIGHTS JAIL

Los Angeles

April 12, 1948

Executive Board

Screen Writers Guild

1655 No. Cherokee

Hollywood 28, Calif.

Attention: Grievance Committee

Gentlemen:

At the request of Miss Penneman I am setting forth herewith a full and complete account of the grievance which I wish to file immediately against Mr. Gilbert Gripes, a fellow member of the Screen Writers' Guild. In order that the Committee may fully understand my position in this matter, and my natural indignation, I intend to make this report as detailed as possible, and it will be necessary for me to go back several years.

My name is Walter P. Zilch and I am an active member of the Screen Writers' Guild in good standing. At least, I think I am in good standing. Now that I come to think of it I have not paid dues for a great many months but this is due to the fact that I receive a great deal of mail on Guild stationery and I have been very busy and many of these items may have become mislaid without being opened. At all events, if I am *not* in good standing I will pay my back dues promptly in order to *be* in good standing again.

I came to Hollywood in 1942 under a seven year contract to Imperial Pictures. I am just completing my sixth year with Imperial Pictures and I have an option coming up some time next month. In view of what has happened this option is not going to be exercised and this is one of my many grievances against Mr. Gilbert Gripes.

Since my arrival in Hollywood I have been assigned to the "B" picture unit of Imperial Pictures. During this time I have worked on approximately twenty pictures, of which two have reached the screen. On one of these I shared additional dialogue credit, and on the other, as the result of a most deplorable arbitration, I merely received credit as a contributor on the adaptation in the Academy Bulletin.

I do not think I am more egotistical than most writers but I must admit that I have been greatly irked by the lack of personal publicity which I have received for all this hard work. When I first came to Hollywood there was an item in the trade papers under the caption "IMPERIAL PACTS ZILCH." This was a very short paragraph which stated that Imperial had pacted me. Other than this item, which was published in 1942, my name has been in the papers on only three occasions. Once, in 1943, when I married Mrs. Zilch; again in 1944 when my son Walter P.

Zilch, Jr., was born, and finally in 1946 when my daughter Susan Zilch was born. I might add that this was not publicity given to me by Imperial Pictures. As a matter of fact, all these mentions were one-line items in the Vital Statistics column, and could not legitimately be considered personal publicity, although I have the clippings in a leather-bound scrap book.

Under the by-laws of the Screen Writers' Guild I am forbidden to advertise my professional achievements. I was perfectly willing to take a full page in the trade papers advertising my collaboration on the additional dialogue on the picture previously referred to, but even this satisfaction was denied to me.

I feel I should add at this point that Mrs. Zilch shares my views on the matter of publicity. Prior to our marriage Mrs. Zilch was for several years the wife of an obscure chiropractor and she had every reason to believe when she divorced him and married a contract scrivener that she would achieve some social prominence.

I AM most anxious for the Grievance Committee to realize that these matters are not irrelevant. I am not injecting the name of Mrs. Zilch into this matter unnecessarily. It was largely for Mrs. Zilch that I did what I did and landed in Lincoln Heights Jail and I want the Committee to know about it.

Other members of the Guild (who shall be nameless) seem to get their names in the papers without any difficulty. Whenever some of these characters give a party or make a wisecrack the columnists report it in detail. This, however, is only the case when the writer in question makes \$3000 a week or more. Writers of "B" pictures, like myself, who make less than \$500 a week never rate these attentions from the press. I consider this grossly unfair.

Since my marriage to Mrs. Zilch we have given a great many fairly lavish parties. We have invariably invited Miss Parsons, Miss Hopper, Mr. Skolsky, and even Edith Gwynn, but none of them have ever attended

these functions, nor have they even had the courtesy to acknowledge the invitations. As the Committee can well imagine, this has been extremely galling to Mrs. Zilch, who has spent literally hours in the kitchen spearing grilled mushrooms and little sausages with toothpicks in order to make these cocktail parties a social success.

On the other hand, when Mr. Gilbert Gripes merely has lunch at Romanoff's and makes some feeble wisecrack that he read in last month's *Reader's Digest* it is widely reported. It is enough to make a person sick.

So far I have merely given the Committee important background information upon which they will be able to judge the specific events which I now relate.

ABOUT three weeks ago I returned to Imperial Pictures after my customary semi-annual six week lay off. Under the terms of my contract with Imperial they have the option of laying me off six weeks in every twenty-six weeks and to date they have never failed to exercise this option. Anyway, I reported back for work, and Mr. Keeler, the scenario editor informed me that my first assignment would be to "dream-up" an original story. For a few moments I was quite elated. I had read in the trade papers that our studio was frantically searching for a good original story for our justly famous beautiful blonde star, Miss 'Bunsen' Burner. I told Mr. Keeler immediately that I had a terrific idea for a Burner vehicle, but Mr. Keeler was not sufficiently interested to hear it. He informed me that Mr. Gilbert Gripes had been borrowed from Paramount at an astronomical salary to write the Burner story and that I was to whip up another whodunit for our endless but profitable "Corpse" series, to be entitled *The Marinated Corpse*.

I left Mr. Keeler's office in a somewhat depressed frame of mind and returned to my office. I was amazed to discover that it (my office) was being occupied by Mr. Gilbert Gripes. When I protested, Mr. Gripes explained that he was there not by his

own choice, but because of our shortage of office space and he added insult to injury by telling me that it (my office) was one of the lousiest he had ever occupied (I am quoting Mr. Gripes verbatim).

I would like the Committee to understand further that Mr. Gripes had made himself thoroughly at home; had taken down my pictures and put up his own, and had also availed himself, without my permission, of my typewriter, stationery, gin-rummy score-pads, and a great many other personal items. In addition to all this, I wish to state further that Mr. Gripes had definitely alienated the loyalty and cooperation of my secretary, Miss Hepplethwaite, who informed me very coldly that during my lay-off she had been assigned to Mr. Gripes and was taking her instructions from him.

I immediately returned to Mr. Keeler's office to lodge a formal protest. Mr. Keeler was tied up in a conference, but his secretary apparently knew all about it. She told me that Mr. Keeler had given instructions for an extra desk to be placed in Miss Hepplethwaite's office which I could use until Mr. Gripes had finished his assignment. She added, in a manner which I can only describe as 'snide,' that Mr. Keeler had checked with Mr. Gripes, who had no objection to this arrangement.

I told Mr. Keeler's secretary that I considered this an outrage and that I proposed to take the matter straight to Mr. J. K. Hoffheimer, Vice President In Charge of Production. In response to this Mr. Keeler's secretary merely consulted a card index file and then, in a manner which was not only snide but sinister, drew my attention to the fact that my option was coming up in a few months. She reminded me that Mr. Keeler took umbrage at writers who went over his head to other executives and said, in conclusion, that, of course, I could use my own judgment.

Anxious to be cooperative with my employers during these trying times I decided not to make an issue of the matter. I returned to my office, or rather, to Miss Hepplethwaite's of-

fice, and later in the day a very crummy old desk was delivered there for my use.

DURING the next two or three weeks I saw Mr. Gripes on many occasions. Every day Miss Hepplethwaite made coffee for Mr. Gripes in his office (or rather *my* office) and on several occasions I was invited to join them. I should perhaps state that during these weeks Mr. Gripes was friendly in a hearty but rather patronizing manner. He frequently inquired of me how *The Marinated Corpse* was coming along and volunteered to "kick the idea around" with me. However, when I inquired of him how the Burner story was coming along Mr. Gripes was consistently uncommunicative.

I am quite satisfied, in the light of what happened subsequently, that Mr. Gripes was deliberately attempting during these conversations to 'pump' me and that he already, then, had plagiarism in view. These are not idle charges; I will substantiate them fully when I relate the details of what took place later.

At this stage I feel the Committee is entitled to know of a further development. Out of consideration for the feelings of Mrs. Zilch I had not informed her of the rather mortifying details of my office arrangement with Mr. Gripes. I feel sure that the Committee will appreciate my motives when I explain that I had merely mentioned casually to Mrs. Zilch that I was sharing an office with Mr. Gripes and when Mrs. Zilch, from this fact inferred that I was working in collaboration with Mr. Gripes I did not deem it necessary to disillusion her.

Mrs. Zilch had been reliably informed by the manicurist at her beauty parlor that Mr. Gripes' salary was \$4000 a week and she was very happy over this association of mine. She urged me to invite Mr. Gripes to a cocktail party and I did so. At Mrs. Zilch's suggestion I again invited Miss Parsons, Miss Hopper, Mr. Skolsky and Miss Gwynn.

The party was not a success. Mr. Gripes did not show up and neither

did Miss Parsons, Miss Hopper, Mr. Skolsky or Miss Gwynn.

Although I was naturally incensed at this affront on the part of Mr. Gripes, I made light of the matter and on the surface our relations remained friendly and cordial. On the Monday following the party (which was held on Saturday) Mr. Gripes explained that he had been called to Palm Springs to confer with Mr. Hoffheimer and Miss Burner on the Burner story. Mr. Gripes asked me to convey his apologies to Mrs. Zilch, which I agreed to do.

It was in the course of this conversation with Mr. Gripes that I foolishly confided in him. In an ill-considered moment I told him of my sense of frustration in the matter of personal publicity. Mr. Gripes affected to be extremely sympathetic. He told me, in effect, that he considered me to be a highly talented writer. He said that he was greatly impressed by some of the gags from *The Marinated Corpse* which I had related to him.

I make no secret to the Committee of the fact that I was flattered by this attitude of Mr. Gripes. While I did not accept as authentic the report of Mrs. Zilch's manicurist regarding Mr. Gripes' salary, I nevertheless knew him to be a man receiving at least \$3000 a week and I was impressed.

I asked Mr. Gripes whether he employed a press agent to keep his name constantly in the syndicated columns. Mr. Gripes maintained that he had never employed a press agent. He said that it was merely a matter of knowing the right people and doing the right thing at the right time and in the right place.

While we were on this subject Miss Hepplethwaite came into the office with Mr. Gripes' coffee and the evening paper. By a strange coincidence there was a story on the front page relating to a pugilistic incident in a cafe between Mr. Nicholas Boff, also a member of the Screen Writers' Guild, and a prominent director. In discussing the matter with Mr. Gripes I made the observation that punching people in the nose at a

night club seemed to be a sure-fire method of achieving front-page publicity. Mr. Gripes conceded that this was very true.

THAT night I discussed the matter at greater length with Mrs. Zilch, who was even more deeply impressed by my observation than Mr. Gripes. Mrs. Zilch, I might add, has a remarkably retentive memory and she was able to recite literally scores of front page stories in which people had punched people in the nose at night clubs, thereby achieving front page publicity.

Fired by Mrs. Zilch's obvious enthusiasm we continued the discussion no longer hypothetically, but, as a practical plan. Both Mrs. Zilch and I inclined to the view that the project was fraught with great possibilities and very little danger. None of the participants, insofar as we could remember, had ever been severely injured physically or legally prosecuted. By implication, however, we agreed that they had all achieved increased stature. We recalled that all those who traded punches were in the \$3000 a week class, or had graduated to this category very shortly thereafter.

Bearing in mind what Mr. Gripes had said about the right people, Mrs. Zilch and I carefully considered a list of possible people whom I could punch. Mrs. Zilch was anxious for me to play it safe and she suggested that I select someone of outstanding and unquestioned prominence to punch, preferably someone like Mr. Louis B. Mayer.

I immediately told Mrs. Zilch that this would not be politic. I explained, of course, that I did not question Mr. Mayer's outstanding prominence, but I pointed out to Mrs. Zilch that I had never worked for MGM, that I hoped some day to work for MGM—that I had nothing against Mr. Mayer personally and that I believed it might prejudice my chances if I should punch Mr. Mayer in the nose, either in a nightclub or anywhere else.

The following day I told Mr. Gripes of my conversation with Mrs. Zilch and I confided to him that I

was now determined to carry out my plan. Mr. Gripes told me that it was an excellent idea. He agreed with me that Mr. Mayer would not be a suitable recipient for the punch and he suggested a prominent actor, preferably Mr. Errol Flynn. Mr. Gripes pointed out that in his opinion Mr. Flynn was an ideal candidate, since being punched in the nose would not seem to him (Mr. Flynn) an unprecedented outrage. He reminded me that Mr. Flynn had both given and received punches at night clubs on other occasions.

For some minutes I seriously considered the advisability of punching Mr. Flynn in the nose. However, I finally dismissed him as a possibility, not because he lacked social prominence or other desirable qualifications, but because I recalled that Mr. Flynn was of an athletic build and would unquestionably return the punch with resultant injury to myself.

It was at this point that I conceived a truly brilliant plan. Mentally reviewing all previous night club brawls it suddenly occurred to me that they had all possessed one factor in common—invariably there was a woman in the background, usually a glamorous blonde. It was for her favors and/or honor that the punches were exchanged. I said to Mr. Gripes, and I quote, "It has just occurred to me that the public may be getting rather bored with night club fights in which the woman is always in the *background*. How would it be if, for once, somebody punched a *beautiful blonde* in the nose?"

Mr. Gripes was profoundly impressed. He said that mine was a brilliant and revolutionary concept and might set an exciting pattern for all future night club brawls.

It was at this point that Miss Hepplethwaite announced to Mr. Gripes that Miss Burner was in her (Miss Hepplethwaite's) office waiting to see him (Mr. Gripes). She was immediately admitted and Mr. Gripes very graciously introduced me to Miss Burner, whom I had previously known only by sight.

In the course of a very brief visit I readily understood how Miss Bur-

ner had acquired her nickname of 'Bunsen' ("SHE BURNS WITH A BRIGHT INCANDESCENT FLAME.") I will confess to the Committee that I was consumed with envy of Mr. Gripes who associated with, and was assigned to write a story for this glamorous creature, whereas I, by virtue of my anonymity, was condemned to writing drivel like *The Marinated Corpse*.

'Bunsen' Burner was only in the office for a few moments. After her departure Mr. Gripes and I resumed our interrupted conversation. In the meantime, however, my plans had crystallized. I told Mr. Gripes that in my opinion I could not select a more desirable nose to punch than Miss 'Bunsen' Burner's. Millions of people throughout the civilized world avidly followed the exploits of Miss Burner, both on and off the screen. Whenever she changed hair-dos or husbands the press of the world broke into a rash of headlines.

I swore Mr. Gripes to secrecy and he agreed with me that my idea was sensational. He raised a point, however, which we discussed in considerable detail. Mr. Gripes maintained, in effect, that the novelty of punching a blonde in the nose might be offset by the opprobrium which would descend upon me as the perpetrator of the outrage. He explained that in certain circles punching a woman in the nose was still considered unsporting, un-American, unethical and lousy. He maintained that it would be necessary for me to have in readiness an alibi, or, as he called it, a "motivation" for the punch.

I said immediately that Mr. Gripes' point was well taken. It was manifestly desirable for me to emerge from the incident in a romantic or sympathetic light.

MY six years of experience at Imperial Pictures have left me with considerable aptitude for "licking" a story. (Parenthetically, let me say that *The Marinated Corpse* has baffled no less than fifteen writers to date, but I have already almost com-

pleted the first draft of a *terrific* treatment.) After less than an hour of meditation I came up with a solution to the problem, which I confided to Mr. Gripes. Mr. Gripes was astounded by what he termed the sheer genius of my solution. I explained that when questioned, (after punching Miss Burner in the nose), I would maintain an attitude of mysterious, but dignified silence. In effect, I continued, I would place the onus of explanation upon the individual reader of the newspaper accounts of the fracas. My only statement to the press would be a terse "No comment. My lips are sealed."

This cryptic statement, I figured, would cause a great deal of speculation, limited only by the imagination of the individual reader. It seemed obvious to me, however, that the incident could not but redound to my credit.

The executives of Imperial Pictures, learning of the incident, would be, I was quite satisfied, deeply impressed. It would, I felt sure, occur to them that any man who went around punching blondes in the nose at night clubs must be a sophisticated and worldly character, well qualified to write Burner vehicles and obviously wasting his talents in writing drivel like *The Marinated Corpse*.

I will confess to the Committee that I permitted my imagination to run riot. I envisaged our executive producer, Mr. J. K. Hoffheimer, summoning me to his office, offering me a cigar and then murmuring in confidential tones, "Now tell me, Zilch, as man to man, just why *did* you punch 'Bunsen' in the nose?" I mentioned these flights of my imagination to Mr. Gripes, who was much impressed. He considered the scene which I had outlined as a very likely contingency.

I did not consider it advisable to take Mrs. Zilch into my confidence regarding this latest development in my plan. Mrs. Zilch is somewhat old-fashioned and I anticipated that she might raise objections to this breach of the accepted code or social amenities. I therefore dissembled to Mrs. Zilch and permitted her to assume

that I had abandoned the punching project entirely.

A couple of days later Mr. Gripes informed me as soon as I got to his office (or rather my office) that the ideal opportunity for carrying out my project had arrived. Miss Burner's latest vehicle *Blondes In Cellophane* was being previewed that night and following the preview a big party was scheduled to be given at the Cafe Mozambique on the Sunset Strip.

The Committee should be informed that the Cafe Mozambique is one of the largest, plushiest and most popular night-spots in Hollywood. The lighting is indirect, the orchestra inaudible, the food inedible, the prices incredible and it is, therefore, jammed to the doors every night by Hollywood celebs, who esteem such qualities very highly in night-spots.

Mr. Gripes informed me that he was going to be in a party which would include Miss Burner that night at the Cafe Mozambique. He did not invite me to be one of this party, but he told me that if I arrived at about 11:00 p.m. in a tuxedo I would probably be admitted without difficulty, at least to the bar. He explained further that Miss Burner would doubtless be at the bar and likewise that most of the columnists might be found there, so that the incident I planned would receive the widest possible coverage. I spent the afternoon discussing with Mr. Gripes in the greatest detail every phase of my plan of action. I rehearsed for Mr. Gripes everything that I planned to do at the Mozambique prior to, during, and after the delivery of the punch.

Mr. Gripes listened avidly and I would like the Committee to appreciate that he contributed not one constructive suggestion. He merely listened and enthusiastically endorsed my entire conception of the event. Before I left the studio, however, Mr. Gripes admonished me not to arrive at the Cafe Mozambique prior to 11:00 p.m. He said that the party would not really be well under way until that hour.

He was quite insistent upon this point and I fully concurred.

AT precisely three minutes after eleven p.m. that night I arrived at the Cafe Mozambique in a Yellow Cab. Assembled in front of the nitery there was the usual crowd of autograph seekers. They appeared to be milling around in a state of excitement but I attached no special significance to this and went straight into the lobby.

I had, on one or two previous occasions, taken Mrs. Zilch to the Cafe Mozambique and I expected it would be crowded, but I had not anticipated the excited mobs which made the lobby almost impassable. I finally elbowed my way into the checkroom and as I was checking my coat I received my first intimation of what had happened. The checkroom girl said to me, "You just came too late to miss the excitement." Still unsuspecting, I enquired casually to what excitement she referred. Whereupon she replied, "Oh, boy, it was really something. A man hauled off and punched Miss 'Bunsen' Burner right in the nose."

Unable to believe my ears I began to mingle with patrons in the lobby and the Committee will understand the amazement I experienced when I learned that the man who had, so to speak, beaten me to the punch and punched Miss Burner in the nose was none other than Mr. Gilbert Gripes. The name of Mr. Gripes was on everybody's lips. Every phone booth in the lobby was occupied by a frantic columnist telephoning the story which, as the Committee is well aware, made front page news throughout the United States and in all foreign languages, including the Scandinavian.

When I had recovered from the shock of Mr. Gripes' duplicity I looked for him in the lobby and was informed that he had retired temporarily to the men's room. Miss Burner, I learned, had been removed in hysterics and an ambulance.

The men's room, like the lobby, was crowded far beyond its normal capacity. Here I saw Mr. Gripes, who was being besieged by reporters. To all their enquiries Mr. Gripes replied, "No comment. My lips are sealed."

Infuriated beyond endurance I pushed my way through the reporters and attempted to remonstrate with Mr. Gripes, who ignored me completely. In loud tones he said, and I quote: "Who is this guy? Take him away. He sounds like a lousy red!"

MY recollection of the ensuing few minutes is somewhat hazy. A scuffle developed, during which I attempted to hit Mr. Gripes. Waiters and personnel of the Cafe Mozambique intervened and to my great chagrin and humiliation I was ejected from the Cafe Mozambique onto the sidewalk, extremely disheveled, and still protesting loudly and, I believe the Committee will agree with me, justifiably, that I had been shamelessly betrayed.

The next thing I knew I was in a patrol wagon on my way downtown charged with disturbing the peace, causing a riot, and unlawful assembly. I was so incoherent with rage and mortification when I was booked that an additional charge of intoxication was preferred.

The following morning, in the Lincoln Heights Jail, I finally obtained permission to see a morning paper. There, in the *Examiner*, was an enormous picture of Mr. Gilbert Gripes on page one and on pages two and three there were additional pictures of his swimming pool, his dog and his speed-boat. There were eight-and-a-half columns of text describing the affair, in which, by actual count, Mr. Gripes was mentioned forty-seven times. A full list of his screen credits since 1936 was also printed.

On page five of Section two of the *Examiner* there appeared the only reference to my participation in the affair. This bore the headline "PARTY CRASHER ARRESTED." The item underneath this caption, which I will quote in full was as follows: "Warren L. Zipf, claiming to be a member of the Screen Writers' Guild was arrested last night for vagrancy in front of the swank Cafe Mozambique. The Screen Writers' Guild is a well-known Communist-front organization.

"Mr. Zipf, who claims to be an

intimate friend of Miss 'Bunsen' Burner and a collaborator of the famous scenarist Gilbert Gripes, is being held for mental tests."

The Committee will note that even in this shockingly distorted account the reporter failed to get my name correctly.

Later in the day I managed to secure copies of the trade papers. The punching incident was lavishly reported in both *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter*, with full credit going, of course, to Mr. Gilbert Gripes. There was no reference to me, not even to my arrest. Sedatives were administered to me and I spent a very bad night.

The following day information of an even more crushing nature reached me. Mrs. Zilch, visiting me in my cell, brought me two clippings which I am attaching to this report and

which I submit as Exhibit "A" and Exhibit "B."

I sincerely trust that the Committee, with all this information at its disposal, will lose no time in hearing my grievance against Mr. Gilbert Gripes. I accuse Mr. Gripes of unethical conduct, betraying professional confidence, and of flagrant plagiarism.

Very truly yours,

Walter P. Zilch

Exhibit "A" from *Variety*, dated April 12, 1948:

STUDIOS SCRAMBLE FOR GRIPES YARN

Frantic bidding among the majors is reported for *Man Hits Blonde*, comedy yarn by Gilbert Gripes. It is rumored that Gripes, who is resting in Palm Springs, has already turned down \$300,000 and is holding out for five hundred G's. Yarn is alleg-

edly based upon the recent incident in which Gripes gave a shiner to 'Bunsen' Burner at a Sunset Strip cafe.

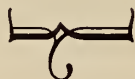
Gripes, on a loan-out to Imperial but under contract to Paramount, has just had his option hiked at a very substantial increase.

Exhibit "B" from "*The Hollywood Reporter*," April 12, 1948:

IMPERIAL DROPS COMMIES

Axe fell yesterday on "B" unit at Imperial. Among those dropped is Walter P. Zilch, contract scrivener.

Zilch is currently under arrest on assorted charges, and is rumored to be very left-wing. A checkup at Imperial failed to elicit any information from the office of J. K. Hoffheimer, Vice-President In Charge of Production other than a terse "*No comment.*"



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Agreement in Darien

ROBERT NATHAN

ROBERT NATHAN is the prominent poet, and author of such well-known novels as *The Bishop's Wife*, *Portrait of Jenny*, *The Enchanted Voyage*, and *One more Spring*. His new book *Long After Summer* has been scheduled for fall release by Alfred A. Knopf.

THE effect of the motion picture *Gentleman's Agreement* upon the community of Darien, Conn. was not at all what had been expected. The good people of Darien were far from feeling depressed, or ashamed; on the contrary, they felt that to be described as one of the most anti-Semitic communities in the country, was to be recognized in an important way. They believed that their true character had been discovered, which was to be resolute, prejudiced, steadfast, and intolerant; and they believed that the advertising they had received had added immeasurably to the value of their property, by pointing out its exclusive features.

For a while, however, this rise in the value of real estate in and around Darien did not do anyone any good, since no one who lived in Darien wanted to sell his property, and move to a less exclusive community. The result was that for several years there was nothing to sell, a fact which depressed Mr. Rufus Deal, senior partner of Deal and Deal, Real Estate—a firm which had listed many of the Darien properties during the old days, and which was now obliged to subsist entirely upon rentals, and on certain lots in the adjoining townships.

Nevertheless, in the course of time, as was only to be expected, several aged people died, and some Darien property came into the market.

When the fine estate of the late Edwin Dogge was finally offered for sale, it was only natural that it should be placed in the hands of Deal and Deal. And it seemed scarcely less natural that there should be an immediate buyer for it. The buyer was a stranger to the community; the only curious thing about it was that the estate had not yet been advertised.

Advertised or not, the lady and gentleman seated in Mr. Deal's office seemed to know all about it. As a matter of fact, they admitted to having visited the estate on several occasions in the past; but they did not seem to want to talk about it. Actually, the gentleman said very little, beyond an occasional "Haw!", or "Hah"; and whatever talking was done was done, for the most part, by his wife. She spoke, Mr. Deal thought, rather rapidly; it seemed to him that she said "What?" a great many times—or at least it sounded like What, though it might, possibly, have been Quat. The gentleman, he thought, had a rather noble face, if a little long; his wife's face was sharper, and distinguished by a somewhat bony nose. Both husband and wife were obviously genteel, and non-Semitic. There was no trouble about the price, and the papers were signed with no more than the usual delays necessary to such a transaction.

A few weeks later, Mr. and Mrs. Johnasson moved into the old Dogge House. They seemed to fit at once—they could not, in fact, have fitted

more quickly and happily—into the Darien picture; they had not been there a week before they seemed to Mr. Deal altogether indistinguishable from the other members of the community. Mr. Deal could scarcely have been more pleased; for he was proud of his town, and liked to bring into it only the right element.

IT was not long after this that The Apples came onto the market. And then a strange thing happened—though no one thought it strange at the time. The very day that old Mr. Appley died—even before Mr. Deal had been handed the property to be disposed of—a Mr. and Mrs. Foygrass applied for it. If Mr. Deal had any doubts, however, they were quickly set at rest when he learned that the Foygrasses were cousins of the Johnassons, whom—as it happened—they closely resembled. This time, Mr. Deal scarcely noticed the length of Mr. Foygrass's head, or Mrs. Foygrass's tendency to gabble. He was gratified to be able to prove to himself that Darien real estate had improved in value even over the year before.

"As you know," he said to Mr. Foygrass, "we are a very exclusive community indeed, a fact which as been extensively advertised on the screen. So we have to ask a little higher price for our real estate, because almost everyone in the country wants to live here."

"Haw," said Mr. Foygrass; and Mrs. Foygrass added, "What?," or possibly "Quat"—he wasn't sure.

It was noticeable, after that, how many of Mr. Johnasson's friends and relatives bought land in and around Darien. And it was a matter of considerable satisfaction to Mr. Deal to see how well these strangers got along with the natives. There were no unpleasant episodes; in fact, the strangers settled down into the community with a minimum of friction. Only Mr. Bonenger, the butcher, was mildly surprised to find that, without exception, they ate no meat.

Otherwise they were indistinguishable from the other inhabitants of Darien. And they were happy. "We are fortunate," said Mr. Foygrass to Mr. Johnasson, "to have found a spot in this world where people see only what they have already made up their minds to see." And Mrs. Johnasson agreed with Mrs. Foygrass that it was delightful to live in a community where people heard only what they had already decided to hear.

BUT Mr. Jacob Grinzer of Brooklyn, New York, driving through Darien one day in his new coupe,

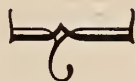
turned a puzzled face to his wife, Bertha, who was seated beside him on the front seat of the car. "Do you see what I see?" he asked.

"I don't know," said Mrs. Grinzer anxiously. "Do I?"

"Where are all the people?" asked Mr. Grinzer. Mrs. Grinzer shook her head.

"Everywhere I look," he said, "I see only jackasses and geese."

"Me, too," said Mrs. Grinzer. And putting her hand on her husband's arm, she gave him a comforting little pat. "Look," she said. "Let's get the hell out of here."



Government by Terror

To maintain the citizen state against the police state, it is essential at any cost and by every means to maintain the principle and practice of government under law. Only through government under law can the citizen be free to rule himself. The moment government by terror is substituted in any form or over any area, the wooden horse has been introduced into the walls, and the city is in danger. Government by terror is an insidious and deadly thing. It infiltrates a society, house by house, and street after street, as the men from the wooden horse took Troy. It silences those who oppose it. It closes their mouths, either through force or fear. And in the end, as we ourselves have seen in Russia and in Bulgaria, and now in Czechoslovakia and Greece, and before in Italy and Germany, it has no opponents. They have disappeared. They are silent—silent or dead, but in any case silent.

There are many forms, moreover, of terror: not all of them visible to the eye in automatic rifles, lengths of rubber hose and the more refined instruments of the secret police. Men can be silenced—silenced or discredited, but in any case silenced—by defamation. They can be driven out of the public service, or rendered useless to the public service, not by constitutional processes and procedures, but by the publication of discreditable and unverified innuendoes about them in the press—or in that part of the press which is willing to print material of this kind. They can even be driven out of private employment by vilification and disparagement without hearing or proof and their means of livelihood destroyed. They can be disposed of, to all intents and purposes, as completely—and quite as brutally—by defamation as by force. Indeed, to the man who respects himself and his good name and the opinions of his fellow citizens—to the man of honor, that is to say, and to the man of sensibility—liquidation by calumny is far more deadly than any other form of public injury.

Let there be no doubt about it: to use public vilification as an instrument of government is to use terror as an instrument of government, and to use terror as an instrument of government is to strike directly at the fundamental American institution—the liberty of the individual under law. What troubles men who have studied the government of this republic and who know the tradition out of which it came and who believe that the great American dream of individual liberty can even yet be realized in this world—what troubles men of this kind as they watch the conduct of the House Committee on Un-American Affairs is the growing suspicion that that committee has little understanding of the American tradition, and little belief in the American dream, and no conception whatever of the disastrous consequences of a policy of government by disparaging publicity.

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HAROLD ROSE

Collectivism, The Atom, The Writer

FREDERIC WAKEMAN

Well-known author of The Hucksters and The Saxon Charm, FREDERIC WAKEMAN has just completed his fourth novel, The Wastrel, for early publication.

WHEN I was younger I used to admire writers, and I would hang around places where they talked. In those days the talk was always about the writer in some or another age. The age would always be a changing age, and according to them we were just at the end of one age and at the beginning of another age, usually a proletarian age. And the talk would be about the writer's debt to society, and how it was up to the writer to stop one group from pushing another group around, or how to prevent wars (this was before the war) or how to help the havenots win their war against the haves. Writers seem to enjoy clotting together in little groups to talk about some age. So I have ample precedent for my title, which is "The Writer Faces the Atomic Age."

Provocative, isn't it? I admit I don't know anything about the atomic age, except what I hear from H. V. Kaltenborn, Raymond Swing, and the like, but then apparently, neither does Atlee, Truman, or Stalin, the U. S. Senate or the Heavy Brass. Come to think of it, nobody seems to know anything about the atomic age, except the writers.

But if you think this is going to be about the writer's position in the atomic age, you're crazy. Maybe, a little later on, I'll throw in an off-hand remark about what writers should really do in this atomic age, but right now, since I've got my title

taken care of, I'll pursue another, and less interesting subject. I shall pass a few remarks about the nature of writers. And when I use the term writer, I mean that unhappy fellow who considers himself Significant with a capital S in the production of Literature with a capital L. That in itself is enough to keep him off any reputable best-seller list, what with all these women writing about splendid hussies of a bygone day. But all things considered he does fairly well with his novels and plays, despite the cold shoulders of Warner Brothers and the women's magazines.

And when our hero, the writer, is lucky enough to break into the best-seller lists, he becomes just like the man who is lucky enough to make a million dollars in real estate, soda pop, or machine tools.

Both consider themselves geniuses in all matters, including international law, atomic fission, labor relations, and the (excuse me) Southern problem.

Some of them even think they know how to make speeches.

But the mighty man of business doesn't let his opinions interfere with his work, and I'm afraid that's exactly what many writers are doing today.

Take a writer, for example, whose book sells a million copies because he dreamed up the notion, complete with four letter words, of the hotblooded

Southern boy who defies his family's racial prejudices by seducing an Eskimo girl through the artful device of luring her into a quick freezing plant. Why should that writer, after the first royalty check has proved his great artistry, start getting all worked up about the current global clam-bake? With what authority does he take his pen in hand to solve world matters? I don't know why, but you can just bet that his next work will have a hero who is a manifesto wired for sound. Then he will throw in for good measure a Negro, and a senile old man who is obviously a fascist. Yes, the minute the author breaks into Winchell's column, he starts paying for his fame by becoming socially conscious.

I wouldn't want you folks to think I am against people who go around noisily doing good in the world. I think it's fine. But there's no denying that social consciousness has been responsible for a lot of bad writing.

After all, I have some deep social ideas too. And why not? Didn't I write a book about some Navy drunks and another about some radio drunks—both of them smutty?

Yes, I too am a deep thinker. And like everyone else, I think that any other person who holds a belief different from mine is completely insane, intolerant, and of course, a dirty fascist.

So that is what I'm going to talk about next. Myself.

ACTUALLY, the only human being, living or dead, that I deeply and honestly know anything about is myself. About the rest of you, I can only wonder. But I suspect that all of us are never what we seem to others and I imagine we all put on different masks and poses for the many different aspects of our outward lives. We learn to make certain standard sets of noises that are expected of us, and we play our daily roles of husband, wife, mother, business man, working man, Democrat, Republican, and so on. I don't think that any of those masks we wear, or those sounds we make, truly represent us, and that beneath it all, we are each of us profoundly unique individuals, irrational, passionate, terrible, and sometimes lovely . . . but nevertheless undefinable in a rational sense. Perhaps we play these various roles for ourselves as well as for others, in a rather devout belief that we should be explicable to ourselves as well as to those around us.

That's confused enough to sound real intellectual. But I want to make the point that each of us has a private inner life that should command more respect than it does, in these days when so much emphasis is placed, misplaced, I believe, on the life of the group and its outward behavior.

So I will return to the one subject on which I am an expert . . . myself. To myself I am the most important thing in this universe. Speaking personally, all life, good or bad, and all people, flow out of me and towards me. Ever since Ernest Hemingway gave some free publicity to Dr. John Donne's thought that no-man-is-an-island, it has been fashionable to make that sound. It's a good metaphor, and contains truth. But the converse makes a lot of sense too. Every man is an island.

That is the basis of my own individualism, and that is why I prefer, as a man and a writer, to hold fast to a belief in the individual, in the freedom, as much as possible, of the individual. That is to say, in one individual, myself, and therefore in all other individuals . . . you.

I say as much as possible, because we have to live with people, whether

in one or many worlds. And we have to make our compromises in good spirit in order to enjoy that life. But we should never, never subordinate our individualism to dependence on some great mass thing that ignores our secret inner selves and only promises in return that we might be able to slick up our outer selves with an abundance of good factory-made products. There is a theory going around that man is primarily a consumer of worldly goods, although he does acquire a lot of goods, there are always soreheads who say he is oppressing the people who weren't so lucky, and that is all right, too. But in our eagerness for security and gadgets we should not forget that shy little fellow, hiding behind that mask.

I am not going to confuse this thing further by using words like Democracy and Communism, Capitalism and Socialism. Goodness knows they've taken enough of a beating from better men than I. And I'll gladly permit any of you to shoot me the minute I mention those two idiot children, Right and Left, or that advertising slogan, Private Enterprise.

But I do hope that you get the idea that I am personally in favor of any kind of life that permits me to act decently and freely, as an individual. And that I am against any kind of life that keeps invading my individual privacy, by imposing conditions against which I, the center of my own private universe, rebel.

NOW what has this got to do with my hero, the Writer? I believe we left him locked up with an Eskimo girl in a quick freezing unit. No, he was beating the drum for the little fellow, the common man, and he has discovered that wonderful adjective, collective. Collective bargaining, collective security, collective this and that. He turns it into a noun, collectivism. He takes what he calls Little Men, and wishes to collect them into one body, for their own good, of course. And in his advanced stages he defines his collectivism as anticapitalistic, which obscures the fact that is is really anti-individualistic. Yes, that's what he is doing . . .

negating the individual and his private inner needs. And it is the saddest sight for a writer of all people to think himself into this state, because in so doing he negates the very essence of his own creative process, which is the creation of unique characters, or individuals.

Nearly all good writing is subjective, not abstract. A novel or a play is the sum of its characters. And nearly all good characters are unique, not typical.

There is no such thing as a collective man. And to me it is a paradox that so many writers, if they had their way, would move into a society in which the unique individual could not exist; furthermore a society in which they as writers would have to change their function and the definition. They therefore declaim against their art, and, I also believe, against their instincts.

Why, I do not know. Perhaps because in these more or less godless times a writer feels the need to have faith in something outside of himself. And in the absence of God, there is the Cause . . . and it is today's fashion that the Cause is for the masses, which is most worthwhile until it reaches the point where the individual becomes lost in the mass, and subject to the orders of those who control the mass.

These political attractions which draw a writer towards life lived through and by the mass would, if realizable, tend to destroy the individual as a unique spirit. The dependence on things of the mass would, if achievable, create a race of conformists, none of whom would be adequate subjects for any painter, writer, or actor.

I say, if realizable, because I don't think the individuals who make up this world will ever entirely submit, or for long, to a controlled, collective life where there is no chance for individuality, where there is no opportunity either for rebellion or serenity; where the group is always greater than the individual in it; and where art, as well as life, becomes subject to the high-policy decisions of the group leaders.

We Americans have always had a strong feeling against such things and perhaps many of you think I am vehemently crying of wolves that don't exist. But the world today, even more than in the thirties, seems to be dividing itself into camps on this subject; as Mr. Churchill pointed out so startlingly at Fulton, Missouri. I don't pretend to go along with Mr. Churchill's solution but at least he opened the great debate, and you can figure that many writers will argue the collective side.

And again I say that I cannot understand a writer, of all people, participating in this suicidal world-drive to make individuals exist to serve the collective state. To me it is a paradox that any creative artist should negate individualism.

A writer is by nature a rebel. He is also a fighter of causes. During the depression he wrote against war and very often, for collectivism. During the war, he wrote *for* war (our side of course) and against fascism. Now, in this postwar period, or period between wars, however you look at it, he is writing against intolerance, mainly racial, and for some kind of world federation.

Broadway, for instance, has become one continuous brightly lit soap-box. Perhaps the causes are worthy, but most of it is pretty bad theater.

Always against a group, or for a group. No wonder the poor individual, the cast of characters, is lost in the ideological shuffle. Could a Falstaff beat the drum for racial tolerance and remain Falstaff, a unique creation of art? Could Mr. Micawber ever recover from the curse of being a symbol of the downtrodden poor? Could Foma Fomavitch stand out as that perfect Dostoevskan character if he were forced to double in brass as the horrible example of a bourgeois society?

And that other great art of the writer, the art of rebelling . . . cannot the writer realize that it must necessarily become a lost art in this collective world?

AS I say, I don't understand it. I don't like it. And I'm against it. Personally, I don't ever want to become a symbol of any group, and I hope I never have to invent characters in fiction who are.

I hope that I never become imbued with a romantic and fierce despair

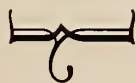
over my own country. I hope I don't ever become savage about conservative folks . . . the kind that writers invariably call reactionaries. Personally I like reactionaries and believe our way of governing America is often benefited by their tenacity. I also like reformers and liberals and think likewise.

But I hope I shall always resent, and never accept, the intrusion on my private life which is the end result of the collective state. It threatens to invade my home, my mind, my sense of privacy, in a way that is hardly worth the gaudy and fictitious promises it makes to the group.

And speaking as a writer, it threatens to destroy, not only my freedom to write as I please, but much more basically, the fierce and tender individualism, the uniqueness of each man and woman, which is the very essence of all creative writing.

That's about all I had to say, except, oh yes, I did promise to say something further about the attitude of the writer in this atomic age.

Well, and you may quote me, I sincerely believe the writer in the atomic age should be pretty darned scared. I know I am.



Vital statistics on United States filmgoers, compiled by Paul Lazarsfeld, head of Columbia University Bureau of applied social research, reveal that patrons under 35 account for two-thirds of the nation's box office receipts. Facts further show that while 70 per cent of film-goers under 24 attend films at least once weekly, only 19 per cent over 45 attend with the same regularity.

Biggest reason for attending films is the plot; title and star names attracting a lesser number.

. *Daily Variety*

The Screen Writers' Guild

April 1933 — April 1948

Guild members in the past haven't been Anniversary conscious, but now that fifteen years have passed since the Guild changed from a social group meeting at the old Writers' Club to an organization seriously trying to better the status of screen writers, the Editorial Committee thought it time to review the Guild's history, its achievements and aspirations, and to consider carefully the direction the Guild should take.

Certain gains for writers resulting from the Guild's efforts stand out sharply, particularly the stabilization of screen credits and the raising of minimum salaries to \$187.50, compared to the fact that in 1939, 46.4% of Guild members received a weekly salary of \$100 or less. The Guild has also strengthened the individual writer in his dealings with producers and agents.

But other questions which Guild members were seriously discussing in the 30's—royalties, licensing, greater recognition of the writers' contribution to the industry—are still unsolved. Appropriately, articles in this Anniversary issue continue the discussion and indicate that screen writers before long may find workable solutions to these problems also.

Where Do You Go From Here?

By SAMUEL GOLDWYN

FOR fifteen years now the Screen Writers' Guild has been stressing the importance of the writer in the making of motion pictures. If I may say so without seeming to be presumptuous, I have been doing that very thing for more than twice as long as the Guild. It would be very easy for me to devote this article to a recapitulation of that theme, but it seems to me that an anniversary is time for critical re-examination rather than for uncritical praise.

So, I should like to ask what has happened to the creative writing talents of Hollywood? What are you writers afraid of? Why does it seem that you have no real faith in your abilities? And finally, what are you going to do about it?

Let me state my thesis plainly and at once. Hollywood screen-writers are, or have become, in large part, a group of skilled technicians who have sacrificed their aspirations to artistry in exchange for the security of a weekly pay-check. And that security even, has turned out to be a slender reed when lush times have passed. Their basic motivation seems to be easier money rather than harder, and thus better, work. When the Big Money, or the thought of it has come in the door, creativeness has flown out the window.

Let me make one or two other thoughts plain at the outset. I am making no moral issues here. Everyone has a right to choose for himself what he wants out of life. I do not deny to any writer the ethical right

to decide whether he prefers Jimmy Fidler's Four Bells to the work, the discipline, the self-denial, the sacrifice that is necessary if one is even going to dream in terms of Nobel.

Nor do I mean to say that the fault—if we can use that term—is that of the writers alone. Producers—including myself—who have set up the system which has permitted and encouraged writers to write with too much of an eye on the payroll must bear their fair share of the blame. But I take it that serious screenwriters are more interested in getting at the root causes and cures, if any, of their own problems than in pointing the fingers at others.

One more preliminary before I return to my basic theme. I am not addressing myself here to the large group of word carpenters who make their living by re-writing Westerns, whodunits, what-is-its and so forth every other week for "X" budget pictures. These are honorable men who make no pretense at serious artistry and if they use the paste pot and shears as often as the typewriter, it is not for me to criticize them.

BUT I am talking to that large body of Guild members who say that they take the profession of screen-writing seriously and who, indeed, do have the potentialities of writing like men instead of like automatons. What has happened to their creative talent?

I have always been in agreement with the thesis that the screenplay

is a form of literature by itself—that writing for the screen is an art all its own. What bothers me deeply is why the practitioners of this art in Hollywood have failed, on the whole, to become truly creative artists but rather have been content, in the main, to remain little more than glassblowers, huffing and puffing and blowing up slender ideas—their own or others—into some sort of shape for the screen. What has happened to fresh, honest, vital, original writing for motion pictures?

As far as I can see, it is at the vanishing point. The reason—from the writers' point of view—seems to be clear. Hollywood writers have sacrificed their potential as truly creative artists for the gold in these here hills. Writers have sought mainly the stimulus of the weekly pay check as their incentive for writing and in the process have lost their ability to think and to create and to write out of the stuff of human relationships in the world around them. I firmly believe that the moment a writer becomes convinced—and adjusts his method of living to that conviction—that he "must" earn five hundred or a thousand or two thousand dollars a week he has compromised himself so seriously with his artistic convictions and abilities that he is at that point well nigh lost as an artist. I am no believer in the "art in a garret" theory, for comfort and decent living and reasonable security are as much an artist's right as anyone else's—although much of the world's greatest art has been

created out of circumstances where none of them was present. And obviously by what I am saying here, I am not attempting to argue that screenwriters' salary scales should be lower than those which now exist. On the contrary, I think that what I intend to propose should increase, rather than decrease the reward for honest original creation among writers here.

Creative writing for motion pictures is not limited to the field of "originals." Much of the greatest work which has so far found its way to the screen has come from the application of great creative talent to the works of others. The screenplay of *Wuthering Heights* is no less a literary classic for the fact that Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur took a novel written almost a century before and applied to that, rather than to a story of their own invention, a depth of feeling and a poetry of expression rarely paralleled on the screen. Nor is *The Informer* any the less a classic because Liam O'Flaherty first conceived the character of Gypo Nolan in the pages of a novel before Dudley Nichols laid Gypo's soul bare on the screen.

But there is not enough creative writing in Hollywood either with respect to work created for the screen or work adapted to the screen. Writers can not avoid their own heavy responsibility for this by blaming "the system" here. For while "the system" has grave faults,—of which this is not the least—you writers, on the other hand, have the opportunity, if you have the courage, to create for yourselves an atmosphere of artistic freedom and an opportunity for even greater financial rewards for the future.

What a desert the contemporary American theatre would be if practically all of its plays had been written by authors who were content to do all their playwriting as employees on the weekly payroll of the Messrs. Shubert instead of creating their plays out of their sweat and toil and despair and effort and struggle, and willingness to wager their time and effort on their ability to create good work—willing-

ness to stake their success on their talent. What a dried-up field American literature would be if practically all novelists turned on their talents like faucets, automatically but only when payment was guaranteed, reported into their publishing houses from nine to five, picked up their checks at the end of the week, and stopped thinking about their work the moment the checks stopped.

WE expect and we get fine, distinguished and, from time to time, great works from playwrights, from novelists, from short story writers because they are writing from what is inside of them; what their reason, their emotions, their experience, their perceptions dictate they must write. Good work does not come easily. No one has yet discovered any magic formula by which fine writing can be distilled effortlessly. Any writer who aspires to something more than money can buy—and also to a chance at even more money than a weekly pay-check will bring—is going to have to make some initial sacrifice. He is going to have to give up the security of a fixed payroll for an opportunity at something more.

I do not deny that there appears to be a need for a certain amount of "weekly writing," if I may call it that, or flat sum contract writing, but the point I want to make is that that has been vastly overdone to the detriment of the screen and of writers themselves. How many writers have told me, "I can't even think about your story unless I'm being paid!" I am sure that it would benefit the writers greatly if they thought and worked and wrote without being on someone's payroll. They would write better on the whole, and they would actually be better paid on the whole.

I think that writers know that I have never hesitated to pay full value—and often more—for writing talent. I do not want something for nothing for myself or for our industry. I do not want writers to be in a position where their work can be appropriated without full payment. Nor do I want writers to be "poor relations" in Hol-

lywood who must depend on a producer's good graces for a living.

On the contrary, I think so highly of the importance of good writing and I have such a genuine admiration for good writers that I want writers here in Hollywood to have the stature, the dignity, the standing which writers in other fields of literature have carved out for themselves. Hollywood is filled with men and women who have the latent ability to become great creative literary figures. No one—not even "the system"—is stopping them from fulfilling their potential. What is holding them back is the desire to have their cake and eat it too. That may be a perfectly human and blameless desire but no one has yet discovered how it can be done.

I believe that the future of American picture making depends on freshness, on originality, on renewed vitality. Such an infusion of strong creative writing can come about only if writers as well as others concerned with the making of motion pictures discipline themselves to the intense effort needed to think and work creatively and daringly for motion pictures.

In my opinion the stimulus of the opportunity to write well and creatively should be enough to cause serious screen-writers to shake off the comfortable, golden bonds which affect their talents. But I am so concerned with the need for revitalizing screen-writing that, as a producer, I am prepared to go further. I am ready to offer writers a percentage of the profits of any original work which they create or adapt for the screen on their own. I assure you that this will mean much more ultimately than weekly pay-checks.

Let a writer bring to me a treatment or a screenplay which he has written on his own, regardless of whether it be an adaptation or an "original," and if it is usable I will pay him much more than he would have received if he had been working on a weekly basis or for an amount fixed in advance. This is a matter of simple economics for if the writer takes the risk involved—and does it successfully—he has much greater

bargaining power and need not agree to any terms but his own.

AS a producer I want Hollywood to be a center which attracts good writers. I want Hollywood writers to aim always at greatness instead of being content with reasonably well-paid mediocrity. I want Hollywood writers to be free men artistically but I have become convinced that there exists among them too great a tendency to sacrifice that freedom for security or for the illusion of security. It was a member of the Screen Writers' Guild itself, Mr. John Rodell, who said in a recent issue of this magazine:

"The price of artistic authority is to work for nothing, at the risk of never gaining any reward at all; to take the risk of never being paid, never being heard, never being seen. It's working in travail, in silence, in doubt and anxiety and alone. It's having your own conception, not borrowing someone else's; your own gestation, not the story conferences, and your own delivery, though it kill you. None of this idea is new. It is as old

as art itself. But it is also as true, and as necessary to say. And it tells why the screenwriter hasn't earned this authority either, this even greater carrier of prestige and self-esteem."

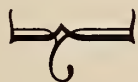
Almost since time immemorial the writers of Hollywood have rent the skies with their demands for more freedom as to what they could write, more authority over what they might write, and more money in payment for what they did write. Here, if you have the courage and the faith in your ability to match your demands, is an opportunity to achieve all those ends you have been talking about. If you are writing on your own no one can dictate to you what you shall write. If you are writing on your own, you can bargain freely as to whether or not any changes may be made in what you write. If you are writing on your own you can rest assured that if you write well, your financial reward will be greater than if your agent had been picking up your paycheck each week.

This is not an idea conjured up by a producer for the purpose of exploiting writers. On the contrary, it

was one of your own most distinguished colleagues, Dudley Nichols, who spoke to writers and directors five years ago in these words:

"It is an axiom that no one will pay you to be a free artist. You are hired for profit — that is common sense. Very well, then, you must stop working for salary. You must devote yourself to the task in hand as do the novelist and the dramatist, and only be recompensed if the film makes a profit. Economically, I believe the writer and director will fare even better under this arrangement than under the salary system. Spiritually they will become whole men and work with integrity."

The choice is entirely in your hands. It may be a difficult one for you to make at the outset but you will recollect that it was a writer who could stir men as few others of his time, Tom Paine, who said "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods. It would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated."



A Thought For The Future

By SHERIDAN GIBNEY

THE role of prophet is an unenviable one, especially in regard to an organization that has been rendered largely ineffectual by internal dissension for a period of many years. There has always been an "issue" dividing screen writers and dissipating their energies. All these "issues," whether political or professional, seem to stem from a fundamental controversy over the nature of the Guild itself: are we a trade union or are we a society of writers seeking to free the screen writer from the status of a hireling? Do we want to perpetuate the salary system or do

we want to establish the writer in his proper place as an independent creative artist with the same control over his material that the dramatist has and an equally fair remuneration in the form of royalties?

This controversy has been obscured by the fact that writers have looked upon their emancipation from an employee relationship as practically hopeless. It is further confused by the presence among us of many writers who, for economic reasons or lack of confidence in their ability, prefer to be employees, even at the cost of surrendering all rights to their ma-

terial and all control over its use. These people the Guild has served well by establishing minimum working conditions and guaranteeing fair credits. But what have we done for writers who would welcome a chance to work independently, provided there were reasonable opportunities of production on a royalty basis? I can truthfully say—nothing. This is not the Guild's fault entirely. The producers have long preferred the salary system and have repeatedly refused to recognize the Guild as representing writers other than employees. Nor has any producer to my knowledge

(with the exception of Mr. Goldwyn in an article appearing in the current issue of this magazine) ever offered to writers an opportunity to work under conditions even remotely similar to those enjoyed by dramatists. But this fact alone does not relieve the Guild of its obligation. Even producers are beginning to recognize the desirability of a change and are themselves pointing the way for writers (and the Guild) to pursue. Mr. Goldwyn deplors the fact that Hollywood writers appear to prefer "Fidler's Four Bells" to a dream "in terms of Nobel." Mr. Goldwyn's concern is commendable; and it is a happy and healthy sign that he is prepared to cooperate in bringing about a renaissance of inspired motion picture writing. But if this is true of Mr. Goldwyn, how much more should it be the Guild's concern to create conditions favorable to the writing of great scripts? It is no mystery that Hollywood writers lack incentive. They have little pride of authorship because as authors they are disregarded and disfranchised. A fine play or novel brings fame to its creator. A fine motion picture brings fame to a star or a producing executive. Despite the current legend in Hollywood

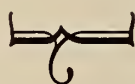
the creative impulse does not thrive on money alone. If there are Shaws and Ibsens among us it is my belief that they have found not the slightest encouragement of their talents. Any writer of genius would be a fool to waste his time trying to convince a hierarchy of business executives that his ideas were sounder than theirs. Such writers are either completely frustrated by the industry or forced to seek recognition in other fields to protect their work from vandalism and their property rights from wholesale confiscation. By confiscation I mean the refusal to permit screenwriters to retain subsidiary rights in the sale of original material and thus deprive them of the continuance of revenue from works that prove successful.

THESE are the major incentives that Hollywood denies to writers. It is tiresome even to repeat them. That these incentives exist in almost every other field of creative writing is well known, and in almost every other motion picture industry except ours. There are no substitutes for the incentives or artistic freedom, recognition of authorship, and adequate royalties. Until these conditions are

made possible in Hollywood, I doubt if any ambitious screen writer, however gifted, will win critical acclaim outside the industry, much less the "Nobel Prize." Jimmy Fidler's four bells will continue to ring merrily for the marketing of star-studded banalities and writers will continue to be blamed.

Looking toward the future, then, I should say that the Guild will more and more concern itself with these matters. Censorship, leasing of material, reservation of rights, and royalties are the essential business of writers if they wish to feel free creatively and unharrassed by economic exploitation. These things are not impossible to achieve. I'm sure Mr. Goldwyn, if he were a writer, would be the first to accept the "heavy responsibility" he places upon us by declaring "you writers . . . have the opportunity, if you have the courage, to create for yourselves an atmosphere of artistic freedom and an opportunity for even greater financial rewards for the future."

These words are more than a challenge. They are a clear and succinct statement of the two reasons for the Guild's existence, one of which we have almost forgotten.



Notes From a New Member

By DAVID CHANDLER

IN the early months of 1946 when I attended my first meeting of the Screen Writers' Guild, the burning issue was the rehiring of veterans. Here were our guys returning after as much as four years in the service (all gallant); their credits were stale; most of them, lacking a year's continuous service for one employer, were ineligible for protection under the Selective Service Act. One speaker dumped the problem squarely in the laps of "the producers" who refused

pointblank to have back our ex-servicemen.

It seemed incredible to me, but it also made me angry enough to have socked a producer if there'd been one within range.

As I burned, the speaker came up with a proposal, generous but not practical. His idea was that the employed writers working solo go to their producers and ask to have an unemployed vet assigned as collaborator. That way every working

Guild member could do his bit toward frustrating the designs of "the producers."

Suddenly those two words began to get me. I'm always slow on the semantic uptake. The producers I knew were gents pathetically eager to be liked, to be thought one of the boys, unmarked by their extended *liaison* with what Henry James has called "the bitch-Goddess Success." I realized that rehiring was no problem for our members in the grand-

and-up per week class. "The producers" could here be generous, a gesture the individuals I knew always liked if it didn't cost too much. So I couldn't understand how this situation could exist.

I kept buttonholing people, urging them to name names and smoke out the bastards who wouldn't rehire our veterans. The closest I could come to a real name was a policy pooh-bah at a Valley studio who turned out, on close inspection, not to be a producer at all, not, that is, if you define a producer as a man whose name appears on film.

I never did find out who "the producers" were that the speaker referred to. He obviously didn't mean Carey Wilson or Jerry Wald or Nat Perrin or Joe Siström or Bob Bassler or Darryl Zanuck. He meant a kind of monster who exists only during the heat of a Guild debate. It taught me one lesson, however. Now when I sit at meetings, I don't go looking for people to sock and I don't forget that the purpose of talk is communication and you can't have communication without accurate definition. From that meeting on, I save my anger for the right parties and I direct and channelize it where it'll do the Guild some good.

* * * *

A footnote to the veteran-rehiring business: The very speaker who was steaming us all up about the baseness of "the producers" in not hiring our people back, turned up shortly after that meeting at a studio where I was working. *He* was brought in to collaborate with a newly-retained veteran on a script. A couple of days later the speaker went to his producer and said he wanted the veteran relieved of the assignment. He could do it, he thought, better without the veteran.

This, of course, never hit the floor of the Guild, which is the place for noble speeches.

* * * *

A new member coming into the Guild is struck at once by its vigor and its massive talent for dissipating that strength and energy. The member has a choice of sitting with the Hatfields or the McCoy's and if he is inclined to ask, "What've factions to do with the issue at hand?" people tend to regard him as a new boy still in the dark.

I don't care a tinker's dam one way or the other about what happened ten years ago. A lot of bitterness has been stored up in the time since then, but I think that the people who keep that bitterness alive and won't let us forget it are doing the Guild a disservice, as the politicians say.

I've heard enough names of the people who formed the Guild, fighting for its existence in the days when the studios set up a blacklist of Guild members and used every means to break the back of this organization while it was weak, to realize they include writers of every political persuasion. And what of it? The Guild came into being for straight economic reasons. There are a lot of things this Guild can't do. It can't certify us as competent writers merely because we're members, for example. What it can do is to try to get all of us a fair share of the economic proceeds of the industry to which we devote time and talent. That's a longhand way of saying the Guild can get us dough. And recognition, which spells dough in this industry.

I am sick to death of nervous ladies who've got me on their mailing lists and send me dreadfully composed missives, every other word in all-caps, begging for my proxy to defeat the lousy Reds. I'm all for defending democracy, but I don't see why this always has to take the form of some matter currently before the Guild. I also think some members underestimate my political awareness when they try to tie up the workaday business of our Guild to the sharpening crises of our time. The nervous lady may be right and the guy with the

great platform manner may be right, but I say, Our business in the Guild is dough, more dough and still more dough. And that's all.

The people who formed the Guild knew this in those first days. Those of them who think they can make of this outfit something else are kidding themselves or are willing for some other purpose to make of themselves Guild wreckers, potential or real.

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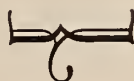
As writers we ought to be trebly sensitive to the cliché and the hackneyed phrase. For heaven's sake, then, will people stop identifying themselves as either "Left" or "Right" or—this is usually said with a purr of self-content—"Middle"?

* * * *

Herewith a Modest Proposal: When a large administrative body, governmental or corporate, finds that its work is being hampered by constant reference to a particular issue which it cannot resolve by itself, what it does is to create a subordinate body to handle that issue so that itself it may continue to function efficiently.

I propose the Guild immediately set up a Bleeding Hearts Association. Our members can take their pick. Does your heart throb with Miss Davies' at the plight of those dear little bow-wows cruelly being cut inch by inch on the lab tables of the nation's scientists? Let's have a Doggie Division in our B.H.A. Are you losing sleep because of the Tideland Question? I say, you, too, are welcome in the B.H.A., Oil Division.

Myself I have strong feelings on the Kuomintang, the death of Petkov, the Italian elections, MacArthur, Henry Wallace, the PCA, Bob Taft, Stalin and Rocky Graziano, but I don't see what this has to do with the Guild and its proper activity. But precisely this kind of thing has been hamstringing us for too long. Let each little strong feeling have a Division all its own in the Bleeding Hearts Association. We'll get more unity that way.



The Authors' League Today

By OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II

ANY assessment of our intended progress in the Authors' League should embrace an understanding of the structure within which our separate groups of writers operate. Each Guild works on those problems which are peculiarly its own and in these cases, the Authors' League is merely a supporting prop. There are, however, many issues of deep importance to all writers in all Guilds and the handling of these common problems is the job of the parent organization, The Authors' League.

During the past years, the four Guilds have established solid gains in the media in which they work. Today, we enter a phase in our history where, with each Guild well on the road to the solution of its individual problems, the most important issues become those which are common to all writers and all Guilds. It is at this point that the committees of the Authors' League with their delegated authorities take on an individuality of their own and it is within the structure of the League that we must operate.

Our current problems are: (1) The immediate threat of censorship; (2) Obtaining workable copyright legislation; (3) Striving for more equitable taxation of writers; (4) The establishment of the principles of licensing rather than selling our works.

1. *Censorship* — A League Censorship Committee has, for a long time, concerned itself with individual cases of specific works being suppressed in a particular locality. (The traditional center of such activities has been Boston.) We have also worked in the broader scene of censorship and in the score of years preceding World War II we had our reward in seeing narrow restrictions on subject matter and treatment relax and, to an extent, dissipate. In these local and national struggles over censorship, we frequently lost individual cases but again

and again we would find that even in these cases our ultimate purpose would be accomplished. We would lose the first round but a few years later we would find that the position taken by our opponents had become untenable in the light of public awakening. We might fail to lift a ban on a particular book but the nuisance value of our attacks made individuals and groups less willing to undertake arbitrary action a second time. Our work in cases like these continues.

New threats to our freedom and new devices are being developed. There is, for instance, a recurring suggestion for self-censorship in the theatre. Such a policy might easily create a preproduction white-washing of plays that could be accomplished with deadly efficiency and would preclude the possibility of public defense. To all such ideas as this we are of course opposed.

There are painfully clear indications that the general tide of restrictive forces is rising. The national insecurity of mind is reflected in the way that the mere threat of censorship brings immediate and submissive response from picture theatre operators, booksellers, screen and radio companies alike. This indirect censorship technique is simple. An individual who speaks unofficially for political and religious groups issues a statement condemning a book and the result is a quick curtailment in the sale of that book in the local stores. The only defense against this technique is constant alertness and readiness to strike back. But the frequency of these cases and the attendant surrender of vulnerable commercial interests is alarming.

All these instances are of small significance compared to the much broader and sweeping technique of the Thomas Committee, the extra-legal condemnation of the man together with his writing. This threat of the censorship of an individual,

frightening in its implications, overshadows all our other problems in this field. The League has issued a statement and taken a firm stand and it intends to continue its fight against this Congressional abuse until the American people are awakened to all that it signifies.

2. *Copyright* — The need to secure workable copyright laws is fundamental. Those who have been members for a number of years know of the struggle carried on by the League and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers in previous years. We lost this struggle before the war. The United States with a bland indifference to the laws of other countries, maintained its copyright isolation policy. Actually, this isolation was liked by motion picture producers and distributors, and radio broadcasters and they used their tremendous finances and political influence to urge Congress to refuse an adjustment of our laws to those of other countries. During the war there was nothing we or the author societies of other nations could do. Now, however, under UNESCO's guidance, a commission is taking up the study of copyright. The Authors' League and the Song Writers' Protective Association will take a leading part in framing recommendations. (It goes without saying that the industries will also be heard from.) It is up to us to persuade the commission that if international understanding and peace are to be attained, a free exchange of ideas is essential and the best way to insure this is for the nations in a spirit of reciprocity to negotiate treaties protecting literary properties. Accomplishment in this field involves painstaking labor over extended periods on the part of our Copyright Committee, our lawyers, our staff and our Washington representative.

3. *Taxation* — There is no group upon whom the burden of taxation

falls heavier than on the professional writer. Whatever expenses he seeks to charge against his income are difficult to prove. He has no social security privileges and there is little logic or justice in the way literary property is evaluated in the case of inheritance taxes. We do not subscribe to the theory that remedial legislation for us would necessarily jeopardize the general tax structure or create precedents of policy for other groups. Our situation is unique and easily distinguishable from other groups. Our legal department is exploring the problem of taxes and hopes to develop recommendations that will give us relief.

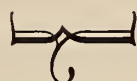
4. *Licensing* — For many years, each Guild has been working on improving contracts in its own field. Screen Writers and Radio Writers have improved employee contracts. The Dramatists have a group contract governing the production of plays. The Radio Writers have a contract for freelance writers with the chains

and are now negotiating with agencies. The Authors' Guild is negotiating minimum contracts with publishers. Where group contracts do not exist, the Guilds have been successful in gradually improving individual contracts. From a study of these agreements it is apparent that certain fundamental points should be included in all contracts if an author is to have a fair deal. These general basic principles are that an author should grant a license for the production or publication of his work only if he receives a royalty. The rights to his work should revert to him when it is no longer exploited. In cases where compensation is a lump sum, the right to publish or produce should be for a limited time. Every author should also have credit for his work and should have control over its revision.

These principles are simple and fair and in most fields they have been accepted. It is true that there is still room for improvement in the reversion clauses but this general phi-

losophy of an author's rights in his actual creations is not denied—except in one field, the field of the motion picture. The studios in the majority of cases buy outright and do not pay for remakes. We must find a way to change this and make license contracts the general rule instead of the exception, just as it is in all other fields of writing.

This is the program of the League. These are our four main objectives. Their attainment can be possible only through the devoted interest and to some extent the self-sacrifice of every member. No element of this program can be attained through any simplified plan. The past has taught us a great deal about methods and direction. The present organization of the Authors' League must use this past experience and combine it with the new energy and closer union of its member and associate guilds to achieve the basic rights to which we believe all authors are entitled and a freedom to which we believe everyone in the world is entitled.



A Brief History of the Guild

By MARY C. McCALL, JR.

IN a Copyright Suit for Infringement and Demurrer, (American Mutoscope and Biograph Company vs. Edison Manufacturing Company, Circuit Court, District New Jersey, May 6, 1905) it was established that: "A photograph which is not only a light-written picture of some object, but also an expression of an idea, or thought, or conception of the one who takes it, is a "writing" within the constitutional sense, and a proper subject of copyright."

So, early in the century, the screen writer received legal recognition, though this decision, strictly interpreted, might have required him to carry an A.S.C. card. It was not until

March of 1933, that the authors of this "writing, within the constitutional sense" banded together into a Guild. It was thirty-seven years after the Circuit Court, District New Jersey, had recognized "writing" in motion pictures, that the producing companies recognized the writers of motion pictures by entering into a contract with their representative, the Screen Writers' Guild.

This is a brief account of the years between.

On March 29, 1933, a special meeting of the Screen Writers' Guild of the Authors League of America was held at the Writers' Club in Hollywood. President Howard J. Green

called the meeting to order. Jane Murfin, Dudley Nichols, Ralph Block, Alfred Cohen, Frank Woods, Vernon Smith, Oliver H. P. Garrett and Tom Geraghty, were present. The meeting voted to engage Ewell D. Moore and Lawrence Beilenson, attorneys, to draft a new constitution and by-laws and a new contract for the Guild.

The late Frank Woods, who attended that first meeting, was reputed to have been the original author of the subtitle: "Came the dawn." Frank used to deny it, but the credit stuck.

The lawyers must have worked fast, because the new constitution and by-laws were approved by the same

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members and Gerrit Lloyd, on April 5, just eight days later. The Treasurer's Report showed a cash balance of \$861.67, and was approved. A unanimously carried motion reinstated Adele Buffington as a member.

On April 6, still in 1933, the Annual Meeting of the Screen Writers' Guild was held at the Writers' Club, with Howard J. Green presiding. John Howard Lawson was elected President by acclamation. Frances Marion was elected Vice President, Joseph Mankiewicz, Secretary, and Ralph Block, Treasurer. Board members were Ralph Block, James A. Creelman, Oliver H. P. Garrett, Howard J. Green, Grover Jones, John Howard Lawson, Joseph Mankiewicz, Frances Marion, Dudley Nichols, Laurence Stallings, and Louis Weitzenkorn. Howard Green was given a unanimous vote of thanks for his work in keeping the Guild alive. President Lawson announced that a plan had been prepared for reorganization to vitalize the Guild. The new contract, constitution and by-laws were presented to the membership. This was a contract among members, not between the Guild and the producers. It contained a provision that no member might enter into an employment contract from the next day, April 7, to May 31 of that year, which called for his services beyond the May 31 date, single picture deals excepted. The contract, containing this much-discussed section, a Code, governing writer's actions, the new Constitution and By-Laws, were unanimously adopted. April 6, 1933, thus became the birthday of the new, reorganized Guild.

The Board, meeting on April 7, passed a resolution providing that any writer who had paid the necessary \$100, and signed the 1933 contract, automatically became a member of the Guild. There were 173 charter members. This Code Committee was appointed: Chairman, Samuel Ornitz, Members, Jane Murfin, Harvey Thew, Doris Anderson, Rupert Hughes, Oliver H. P. Garrett, Robert Riskin, Bert Kalmar, Howard J. Green, Samuel Behrman, John Bright, Malcolm Stuart Boylan, Houston

Branch, Stuart Anthony, E. E. Parmore, Jr.

On April 24, the Board approved Article 1 of the Code, drawn up by Lawrence Beilenson, covering general pay cuts, for submission to the membership for a mail vote. Article 2 of the Code outlawed the use by members of a general booking agency. A membership committee was appointed at this Board meeting, to recruit more members. It was voted to employ a Secretary for the Publicity Committee. The Board's recommendation was that he should be, preferably, an unemployed member of the SWG, and that he be paid \$30 a week.

On May 3, 1933, Article 3 of the Code was discussed by the Board. It provided that a member should not work in collaboration with a non-member, or with a producer who was not a Guild member. There was lively discussion of whether a producer who discharged a member for such refusal should be declared unfair. At this meeting, a rule was adopted that any active member might file with the Secretary of the Guild a proxy, giving another active member power to vote in his stead.

THROUGH that summer and the following winter, the Guild continued to work on the preparation of the Code of Working Rules. A vote of 75% of the membership was required. Articles 1, 2 and 3 were adopted June 14; Articles 4 through 10, June 28, Articles 12 to 16, on February 14, 1934. The minutes of that period do not tell us what happened to Article 11. By February of 1934, the Guild had 343 active members.

Article 4 of the Code of Working Rules dealt with royalty contracts. It provided that the author of original screen material, whether in the form of ideas, synopsis, original story, treatment, or script, must require the return of his material to him, unrestricted in any way not later than six months from the date of sale, if within that six months' period, the producer had failed to produce the material as a motion picture. A pro-

ducer could extend his option on the material for another six months by paying the sum specified in the royalty contract. This Article also included the right of the author to approve or disapprove, in writing, any changes in a script which was his original work; his right to require examination, by a Certified Public Accountant of his choosing, of the producing company's books; his right to require the producer to consult him in the selection of a director and the casting of a picture. The author's royalties were to be a percentage of the producer's gross receipts.

Article 5 had to do with speculative writing. It provided that "any member may refuse to discuss with any motion picture producer the member's own proposal for the screen development of material presented to him by the producer, until he is actually in the employ of such producer."

Ethics and Discipline of Members were covered by Article 6. Our present Code of Working Rules covers the same ground. Writers were required to notify other members when they were assigned to the same properties. No writer was permitted to claim or accept a credit which did not truly state the facts of authorship. Any member, or any other person, including a motion picture producer, could file a complaint against any member, for violation of these rules.

Article 7 set up rules covering relations of writers and producers or directors.

Article 8, dealing with free lance writers, mentioned an already existing Writer-Producer Code of Practices. The Guild incorporated the provisions of this existing code in their own Code. Among them was this rule: a free-lance writer, who has worked on a week-to-week basis for not less than 10 weeks at \$500 or less, shall be required to give, and shall be entitled to receive, not less than two weeks' notice prior to the termination of his employment.

Article 9 again borrowed from the extant Producer-Writer Code. It provided that writers employed to write a treatment, for a "specified aggregate compensation," ("flat deal" to

us), must be paid for the treatment upon delivery, and must be notified within a week of any changes required of them.

Article 10 stated that no producer might discharge a member without notice, in the case of short-term employment, unless the member could terminate without notice.

An Agents-Writers Code figures in Guild history for the first time in August of 1933, when Ernest Pascal attended a meeting, held at 1655 North Cherokee, to report on such a Code. A Guild Committee met on March 31, 1948, with a Committee of the Artist's Manager's Guild to bargain for a Minimum Basic Agreement between writers and agents.

The Treasurer's Report at this August meeting showed a cash balance of \$13,307.47.

NRA was discussed on the same date. The attorney, Mr. Beilenson, was instructed by the Board as follows:

1. The Code for Screen Writers under N.R.A. must include a provision for arbitration and conciliation procedure between the SWG and the producers in regard to all complaints of writers against producers, and vice versa, and for protective action and arbitration in all matters of plagiarism.

2. That Mr. Beilenson meet with Jack Natteford, and discuss with him the free-lance writer problem, arrive at some definite workable procedure, and submit it to the Board at its next meeting.

3. That in the Code submitted under NRA, these provisions to protect Readers be incorporated: A minimum of \$50 per week for anyone with six months' experience as a Reader. Established minima for Outside Readers. A copy of the Code of Working Rules for Readers, submitted by the Code Committee of the Readers' Branch, was sent to Mr. Beilenson.

THE treasurer was authorized on August 14, 1933, to pay John Howard Lawson's expenses to New

York and back in connection with the NRA. Mr. Pascal was instructed to meet with the agents' representatives as soon as possible, and to tell them that the Screen Writers' Guild insisted upon fulfillment of the agreement with the Guild, and that no changes in the agreement, beyond mere details of legal language, might be made. He was also to insist that an agreement be reached within two weeks. Again it must be noted that there has been a fifteen year delay in achieving this agreement. Jack Natteford was instructed to confer with the publicists Landy and Hunt, with regard to the preparation of a weekly bulletin to the membership. A general membership meeting was called for August 21, immediately following which, Jack Lawson was to fly to Washington as the representative of the Guild. The call to the meeting stated that the Executive Committee, in collaboration with the Dramatists Guild and the Authors League, had shaped its demands, to be laid before the Federal Government.

During 1933, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences had fallen into disrepute among workers in the industry, because it had been used by the producers in their efforts to institute a fifty per cent salary cut. At the membership meeting, John Howard Lawson urged all SWG members who still remained in the Academy to resign. A motion was passed requiring Guild members to quit the Academy "as those who refuse are acting in direct prejudice to the best interest of the Guild."

The content of the N.R.A. code was discussed, and Section 4 was amended to cover specifically the Guild's protest against the then existing pact among producers, which precluded a writer from bargaining for his services with one studio while employed by another, even though his contract was soon to expire and he had decided not to re-sign. Jack Lawson was empowered to present the SWG demands for a code.

The Executive Board on September 20, telegraphed Mr. Lawson in Washington, stressing four major

objectives in the NRA Code negotiations: compulsory arbitration on individual writer disputes, the Authority to represent writers in arbitration, balloting to be conducted by the Authority; collective bargaining with the Guild to represent writers; elimination of the Academy; establishment of a Code Authority with employees represented equally with employers, the Guild to name its representative when employee problems were concerned.

Ted Paramore succeeded Jack Natteford as Editor of the *Screen Writers' News* in August, 1933.

Oliver Garrett acted as President during Jack Lawson's absence in Washington. Louis B. Mayer issued a statement attacking Garrett, and threatening to release all Guild members from their contracts with his studio. This had been provoked by the Guild's action prohibiting members from signing long-term contracts. The Board released to the press a counter-blast.

Jack Lawson returned from Washington on October 3. The Board empowered Luise Sillcox, Executive Secretary of the Authors' League, to represent the Guild at Eastern meetings on the NRA code.

A membership meeting was called to oppose Articles 9 and 10 of the proposed NRA code. Eddie Cantor, President of the Screen Actors Guild, accepted an invitation to speak.

Luise Sillcox wired from New York, proposing that the Code include provision for a Board of eight, four writers, four producers, for control and licensing of agents, and responsible only to the Administrator; and a committee of five writers and five producers on working conditions for writers, with provision for compulsory arbitration. The Board endorsed these proposals, told Miss Sillcox that "creative talent of all kinds is trying to map out course of action for defense against intolerable propositions of the Code," asked that it be informed immediately as to whether her two proposals were to be included in the Code, and threatened that if the objectionable features were written into the Code, the Guild would seek

injunctive relief and would demand a Federal investigation of the entire motion picture industry.

Ernest Pascal, Horace Jackson, and Francis Faragoh were instructed to confer with the Actors Guild on mutual problems, and to determine, if possible, whether the proposed directors' organization planned to join with the actors and the writers in their fight on Article 5 of the NRA Code, and what the SAG's attitude was in regard to a possible strike, though no binding commitments were to be made.

ONE of the principal activities of the Guild was the operation of a Commission on Conciliation and Arbitration, which handled disputes between members and between members and producers, and credit questions. Seton I. Miller was Chief Commissioner, and Frank Butler, Assistant Commissioner.

On November 6, 1933, the Readers Branch of the Guild asked that a second joint mass meeting of actors and writers be held, since the joint meeting of October 15 protested against the establishment of maximum salaries in the Motion Picture Code, but took no action towards inclusion in the Code of minimum salary provisions. The Readers also wanted the Board to take steps to bring New York readers into the Guild. The Board voted to notify the Artists Managers Association that, because it had failed to comply with the terms of its contract with the Guild, the Guild was rescinding that contract. Ernest Pascal was instructed to meet with Laurence Beilenson and Dudley Nichols to draw up an Article for the Guild's own Code, to replace Article 11, which had apparently embodied the now disaffirmed contract with the Agents. John Howard Lawson was authorized to enter into negotiations or discussions with the newly organized newspapermen's union in New York, looking toward cooperation and affiliation. He was also urged to proceed as rapidly as possible to conclude arrangements with the Dramatists Guild and the

Authors League, in order to "reach finality with the contract" between SWG and those organizations.

On November 16, Eddie Cantor was asked to discuss informally with the President of the United States the Screen Writers' Guild's attitude in regard to the NRA code. Mr. Cantor had been invited to confer with the President, but our Guild had received no invitation.

Wells Root replaced Dudley Nichols as Chairman of the Guild's own Code Committee.

On November 20, a long telegram was sent to Eddie Cantor in Washington. It gave figures from *The Hollywood Reporter* regarding the arbitration agreement of 1931, entered into by the producers and the Academy, at that time the only employee body in existence. It pointed out that Article 5 of the proposed NRA Code was almost identical, and said that "Competitive bidding for employees according to our figures has been stifled. 700 employees who come under the agreement are working without contract . . . only two received outside offers while working . . . the employing producer virtually has the protection of a contract without any obligations . . . producers even though they have the right will not openly bid for the valued employees of another producer. . . . Surely the Government will not write it into the law as Article Five."

John Howard Lawson went to New York again, and Ralph Block was appointed Acting President.

On November 28, the Guild wired President Roosevelt asking that John Howard Lawson and Frances Marion be appointed to the Code Authority.

A copy of the National Recovery Act, Motion Picture Code, was received here on December 5. The Board took this unanimous action: "It is the opinion of the Executive Board that although there are some provisions in the Motion Picture Code . . . which the Board believes to be unfair and prejudicial to the interests of employees generally, that nevertheless the Board . . . intends to cooperate to the best of its ability under the terms of the Code as it

is laid down, and take such advantage of its provisions as will allow them to better the conditions of employees generally."

Marc Connelly, President of the Authors' League, sent a telegram to a membership meeting on January 4, 1934, assuring the Guild that the proposed clauses in the Code which the Guild found objectionable would not be put into effect until after an investigation of Hollywood conditions had been made. Mr. Connelly said, "Producers' contentions that investigation was not necessary were ignored largely as result of your efforts. The Screen Writers' Guild has reason to be proud of the outcome of its first public encounter with producers. The Guild is to be congratulated on its victory. The Screen Writers' Guild and the Authors League of America are now the undisputed spokesmen for authors."

A meeting of all screen writers, to be held under SWG auspices, was called for January 15, at the Writers' Club, to nominate representatives for positions under the NRA code. The Credentials Committee decided that to attend this meeting, a writer must have received a screen credit on a picture released in the United States within 18 months prior to the meeting.

On March 20, 1934, Jack Natteford warned the Board, in a long letter, that another group was forming within the Guild, that this dissident group had held a meeting, and was circulating rumors that the Guild hadn't a dime left in its treasury, that a radical element was using the Guild for its own purposes, that the leadership of the Guild was so unacceptable to the Producers that they had brought pressure to bear upon the President and the Code Administrator to appoint Academy, rather than Guild, members to NRA offices. Mr. Natteford quoted this group thus: "Are we aware that the present Board has shown how little writers are to be trusted with money, by their extravagant dissipation of nearly thirty thousand dollars in one year,

by their financing of expensive junkets for their president . . . to New York and from New York to Washington?"

At the annual meeting in April of 1934, Ralph Block was elected President, Wells Root, Vice-President, Tristram Tupper, Secretary, Ernest Pascal, Treasurer.

A magazine was launched, with Ralph Block as Managing Editor.

In June, the Guild was notified by Sol Rosenblatt of NRA that Ralph Block, John Emerson, James Gleason, Dudley Nichols and Waldemar Young had been selected for the five writer-five producer committee under the Code. Gladys Lehman, Rupert Hughes, Jack Natteford, Seton Miller and Courtney Terrett were alternates. The Actors and Writers Boards, meeting jointly, wired Mr. Rosenblatt their gratification at the personnel appointed.

In January of 1935, Ralph Block reported to the Board that the brief from the 5-5 Committee was ready to be sent to Washington, but the legal death of NRA ended this brief period of writer-producer cooperation.

On July 5, 1935, the National Labor Relations Act was passed. Ten days later the Board sent a letter to the major studios and principal independents, stating that the Guild, with 770 members, was the bargaining agent for writers, that the negotiations which the producers were reported to be carrying on through the Academy, which had 38 writer members, were illegal, that the Guild stood ready to appoint a committee for collective bargaining for writers under the Wagner Act and invited the producers to do the same.

Ernest Pascal, as President, Nunnally Johnson, as Vice-President, John Grey, Treasurer, Robert N. Lee, Secretary, had taken office in April of 1935. Nunnally Johnson resigned in December, because he had become a producer.

In September, the Board warned the membership through the magazine, of the dangers inherent in becoming parties to the proposed Academy Code of Fair Practice Between Producers and Writers.

In October, the Board took action favoring the inclusion in the agreement covering SWG affiliation with the Authors League, of a provision that no SWG member would adapt any story material not written by a member of the Dramatists or Authors Guild, unless it was in public domain. It asked the Authors Guild to pledge its members not to sell for picture use any material unless the contract of sale contained a provision satisfactory in form to the SWG and the Authors Guild and approved by them both.

Francis Faragoh met with the League Council in New York during the fall on the affiliation agreement. Luise Sillcox appeared before the Board in January of 1936, and explained the affiliation plan in detail. Later in the month, the new Authors League constitution was approved.

In March, the Board passed unanimously a resolution asking the League, working with the three Guild Boards, to draw up a minimum basic agreement, including a provision for League shop, and to order that no member should sell his services or his material to any producer who had not signed the basic agreement. The membership was to direct the Council as to the time, the terms, and the manner of putting the basic agreement into effect.

ON April 6, the Board decided to call the annual meeting for May 2, instead of April, and to submit to the membership Article XII of the Code of Working Rules, providing that no member might contract for his services or his material beyond May 2, 1938, as well as the question of direct affiliation with the Authors League, and the League shop proposal.

On the last day of April, representatives of the so-called "opposition group" within the Guild, presented their views to the Board. They were James K. McGuiness, Patterson McNutt, Robert Riskin, John Lee Mahin, and Howard Emmet Rogers. The group declared itself solidly for the Guild. Its members pledged themselves to vote for continuance of the

order pursuant to Article XII, for the principle of amalgamation with the League, and for actual amalgamation as soon as certain changes in the constitution and by-laws could be made, assuring SWG of a greater measure of autonomy. The Board, in the interests of harmony, decided that the principle of amalgamation only should be voted on at the annual meeting.

Harmony reigned at the annual meeting on May 2: Ernest Pascal was elected President, Seton I. Miller, Vice President, E. E. Paramore, Jr., Secretary, and John Grey, Treasurer. The membership voted 193 to 25 for the principle of amalgamation with the League, and 188 to 32 for the adoption of the cut-off clause, Article XII of the Code of Working Rules. A committee was appointed to revise the League constitution so as to safeguard SWG autonomy. The new Board included the Messrs. McGuiness, McNutt, Kalmar, and Riskin, representing the group in the membership who opposed immediate affiliation.

The harmony and sweet reasonableness which had prevailed at the Saturday night meeting, was violently disrupted on Monday, when Mr. McGuiness, Mr. McNutt, and Mr. Kalmar announced to the new Board their intention of resigning. Mr. McNutt, who was the spokesman for the three, stated that "the Guild ain't got a Chinaman's chance," reported dozens of resignations already in the mail, and the formation of another writers' guild, led by Herman Mankiewicz, which had been assured that it would be recognized by the producers. Robert Riskin asked for proof that members were resigning in large numbers. Mr. McNutt named no names, but assured him it was so. The three urged Mr. Riskin to join them in resigning from the Board, since they were all four now representatives deserted by their constituents. Mr. Riskin refused to do so. Mr. McGuiness, Mr. Kalmar, and Mr. McNutt were asked by the Board to think over their proposed resignation for twenty-four hours, and agreed to.

THE resignations of the three Board members were received and accepted the following day. Edwin Justus Mayer, Samson Raphaelson and Sidney Buchman were made a committee to issue information to the trade papers each day, to combat attacks against the Guild. Ted Parmore was appointed chairman of a committee to send a daily bulletin to the membership, keeping them apprised of Guild activity. Ernest Pascal, Seton Miller, and Samson Raphaelson were instructed to try to negotiate with the producers for a fair minimum basic agreement between them and the Guild.

On May 8, an unofficial meeting of active members was held at the Hollywood Athletic Club. Members reported instances of intimidation and coercion by producers. It was decided that the Board should rescind its order pursuant to Article XII, and should urge SWG members to make application at once for membership in the Screen Writers' Guild of the Authors League of America.

123 resignations were acted upon on May 11. The Board asked the Council of the League to meet as soon as possible to set up under its Constitution the Screen Writers Guild of the Authors League. The Council acted upon this request, and accepted to membership in the new Guild 125 screen writers.

During this critical month of May, the *Screen Guilds Magazine*, which had been published jointly by SAG and SWG, as an outgrowth of our original magazine, was given over to the Actors, with the understanding that nothing concerning writers be published without SWG Board approval.

On July 20, the President and the Secretary were instructed to file a certificate of dissolution with the Secretary of State of California.

July 28 was the last Board meeting of the California corporation. It became a concurrent meeting of the Eastern and Western halves of the Authors League Council. The affiliation agreement was discussed. This agreement was adopted by the Trustees of SWG on January 25, 1937.

There were now 143 Authors League SWG members. The League took over the manuscript registration service.

On September 3, the Western Council recommended that the Hollywood office be closed.

The first meeting of the Executive Board of the SWG, and the Council of the League, was held on May 25, 1937. The Wagner Act had been upheld by the Supreme Court, and it was decided to hold a mass meeting on June 21, to determine the Guild's collective bargaining rights under the Act. The Board resigned, so that the Council might ratify the appointment of those elected in May of '36, as the Board of the new organization.

Dudley Nichols, Charles Brackett, Frances Goodrich, and John Grey were elected President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer on June 1, 1937. It was announced that 40 new members had joined the Guild.

The Board, writing to Marc Connelly, on June 15, mentioned the formation of the Screen Playwrights, who had secured a contract with the producers, and pointed out the danger that this group, under the Wagner Act, might call for an election for sole bargaining rights. The letter explained that the group which had remained loyal to SWG felt justified in taking steps to revive the Guild, and so had called a mass meeting, though there had not been time to consult the Council. The officers of SWG asked authority from the League to suspend Authors League members who were active in the Screen Playwrights. Among these was Rupert Hughes.

On June 16, 1937, Leonard Janofsky became Guild attorney, and Anthony Veiller was appointed Chairman of the Membership Committee.

The Guild assented to the formation of a Radio Guild within the League.

On July 11, the League granted the Guild the right to conduct and control preparation for, and the actual litigation then pending before the NLRB to which the Guild was a party; to manage the office of SWG; to conduct a publicity campaign for

funds and new members; to negotiate with the Producers.

On August 19, the Producers were asked by letter to bargain collectively with the Screen Writers' Guild.

The Boards of the Actors, Directors, and Writers Guilds issued a joint statement on September 15, taking a stand in opposition to any encroachment on their jurisdiction by the IATSE. An Inter-Talent Council, consisting of the presiding officers and three Board members from each of the Guilds, was formed.

Since the Academy had assured the Guild that the Screen Playwrights would not be recognized by it, it was agreed that three representatives of SWG should sit on the Academy Committee, and that the Guild would participate in the Academy Awards.

At the annual election and meeting on December 15, 1937, Anthony Veiller reported 470 active and 75 associate members. The Board elected in June was re-elected.

The National Labor Relations Board handed down a decision June 4, 1938, ordering an election to determine the collective bargaining agent for writers. The balloting was to be by studios.

At a membership rally on June 13, the SAG and the SDG expressed their hope for a Screen Writers' Guild victory in the election.

On June 27, Dudley Nichols urged all writers eligible to vote to do so at the NLRB election the following day. He emphasized the "dangers of the IATSE threats which would affect all writers should they remain divided and not united in one solid body." Dorothy Parker read a *Motion Picture Herald* report of George E. Browne's statement at the IATSE convention in Cleveland that IATSE planned to "embrace the entire industry."

On August 8, the NLRB certified SWG as collective bargaining agent for all screen writers.

On September 19, the Guild asked the studios to recognize it as the

writers' bargaining agent. They refused to do so.

At the annual meeting in 1938 Charles Brackett was elected President, Philip Dunne, Vice-President, Maurice Rapf, Secretary and Ring Lardner, Jr., Treasurer.

On February 21, 1939, the National Labor Relations Board issued a complaint against Universal, Hal Roach, Selznick, 20th Century-Fox, Loew's, Inc., Warners, RKO, Columbia, Paramount, and Goldwyn, in which it was stated that these producers had committed various unfair labor practices and setting March 6 as the date for a hearing on the complaint.

Prolonged litigation ensued. The hearings were postponed. The Guild amended its complaint August 1, 1938. After a hearing in October, the Board issued an Intermediate Report, to which exceptions were filed by the Guild and the Producers. A period until July 20, 1940, was allowed for the filing of briefs.

In November 1939, a new set of officers was elected: Sheridan Gibney, President; Sidney Buchman, Vice-President; Dwight Taylor, Secretary; Boris Ingster, Treasurer. A year later Mr. Gibney and Mr. Buchman were re-elected, while Dore Schary was elected Secretary and Lester Cole, Treasurer.

On November 14, 1940, the National Labor Relations Board dismissed the complaint. The Guild had entered into a stipulation on October 28 that the case might be dismissed. The Producers had met with Guild representatives for a period of two months, and had finally agreed to terminate the Screen Playwrights Contract if an agreement were reached with SWG. Because of this, Mr. Janofsky thought that the Board might rule against the Guild. Mr. Leiserson, of the NLRB, was quoted by Mr. Janofsky as having said before a House committee that the Guild's case was "smelly." The negotiations with the producers began early in March and ended the last of April, with no agreement having been reached.

IN October, 1940, negotiations with the Producers were resumed. Sheridan Gibney, Ralph Block and Mr. Janofsky, represented the Guild. A Guild credit arbitration system was set up, and the Producers agreed to an 80% Guild shop.

A Basic Agreement between Producers and Writers for a period of six months resulted from these negotiations. On December 30, it was reported that Republic refused to sign the agreement.

A tentative draft of a proposed agreement with the Artists Manager's Guild was accepted by the Board January 6, 1941.

The Guild made a loan to the Radio Writers Guild to finance a trip east for negotiations.

Senator Robert W. Kenny, and his associate, Morris Cohn, became Guild attorneys on January 27, 1941. A special meeting voted that the Guild begin negotiations with the Artists Managers Guild. The Board was given authority to discipline a member for dual unionism.

Negotiations with the producers continued. In April and May there was discussion of the need for a strike vote. The membership on May 1, 1941, endorsed the demands of the Guild Bargaining Committee and instructed the Board to call a membership meeting to consider and discuss the advisability of taking a strike vote in case these demands were not reasonably met by the Producers.

A membership meeting, the minutes of which are missing, was held on May 19. Sheridan Gibney telephoned Luise Sillcox the next day and suggested that the League Council appoint a special emergency committee with full power to take whatever action seemed appropriate in the event that the SWG was forced to strike.

The members were notified on June 9 to hold themselves in readiness for an emergency meeting on 48 hours call, and were told that the Bargaining Committee was meeting with the Producers on June 13.

At a membership meeting on June 16, 1941, the Board recommended to the membership the acceptance of the Producers' counter-proposals,

which called for a seven year contract, and a minimum wage of \$100 for writers who had screen credits, or who had worked 52 weeks in three years. The membership accepted the counter-proposals unanimously.

The drafting of the contract was then begun, but it was not until May, 1942, that it was signed.

In June, '41, the Board decided to postpone negotiations with the Artists Managers until the agreement with the Producers was signed.

In November, 1941, Sidney Buchman was elected President, Ralph Block, Vice-President, Robert Rossen, Secretary, and Lester Cole, Treasurer.

Shortly after the outbreak of war, the Guild joined with the Radio Writers Guild, the Publicists, Readers and Cartoonists Guilds, and the Newspaper Guild in forming the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, through which assignments to various Government writing jobs were made, material for USO camp shows was prepared.

At the annual meeting in 1942, Mary McCall was elected President, Lester Cole, Vice-President, Sheridan Gibney and James Hilton, Vice-Presidents, Talbot Jennings, Secretary, and Hugo Butler, Treasurer.

The Guild cooperated with all other industry groups in the War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry. In 1943, the President of the Guild became Chairman of the Hollywood Division of that all-industry committee.

These are 10 years of Guild history—organization, expansion, disruption, reorganization, expansion, recognition. With the more recent story of the Guild, most of you are familiar. There have been gales which have shaken us since 1943, not so violent as the 1936 hurricane, but gales, nonetheless. In the next fifteen years, big winds will blow on us, but when they subside, we will still be on our feet and moving forward, still fighting for the dignity and security of those who have chosen motion pictures as their field of "writing" within the constitutional sense."

Nat C. Goldstone Agency



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C R e s t v i e w 6 - 1 0 7 1

One-Month Diary of a Screen Writer

(As told in terms of itemized income and expenses)

- 3- 1-48. DEPOSIT: (What's left of week's \$500 paycheck by the time it reaches me after following deductions: agent's comm., State U.I., Fed. O.A.B., svng. bnd., M.P.R.F., Fed. Wthld. Tax)\$ 326.85
BALANCE IN CHECKING ACCOUNT 3,050.32
MEMO: This is final check on studio term contract. Must be careful of expenditures until agent swings new assignment.

Withdrawals

- 3- 1-48. Rent 200.00
3- 3-48. Hollywood Typewriter Shop (repairs & carbons) 20.00
3- 4-48. Franchise Tax Commissioner (state inc. tax) 102.00
3- 6-48. Groceries & miscl. 50.00
3- 6-48. Screen Writers' Guild (dues) 10.00
3- 9-48. Red Cross 10.00
3-10-48. Food & drink from Embassy & Vendome (wife's birthday party).... 200.00
3-10-48. Wages of charwoman who comes once a week (birthday party).... 8.00
3-10-48. Butler & maid for one evening (birthday party) 20.00
3-10-48. Down payment on diamond ring (wife's birthday present) 500.00
MEMO: This party can be considered strictly business expense. L.M., the producer my agent is working on, came with his wife, who was duly impressed by my wife's diamond ring. No use giving them the impression I *need* the job.
3-11-48. DEPOSIT: (refund from jeweler on down payment of diamond ring 500.00
BALANCE IN CHECKING ACCOUNT 2,430.32

Withdrawals

- 3-11-48. Costume jewelry for wife in place of ring 15.00
3-15-48. Dinner & drinks at Romanoff's with L.M. and his mistress, (business expense) 60.00
3-15-48. Lunch at La Rue. (my wife entertaining L.M.'s wife) 30.00
3-15-48. Telephone bill 5.62
3-18-48. Cash for miscl. living expenses. 87.39
3-19-48. Motion Picture Herald (renewal of subscription) 10.00
3-23-48. California Super Service (automobile expenses) 22.31
3-27-48. DEPOSIT: (social security check) 20.00
BALANCE IN CHECKING ACCOUNT 2,220.00
3-28-48. DEPOSIT: (refund on Federal inc. tax) 200.00
BALANCE IN CHECKING ACCOUNT 2,420.00
MEMO: Not bad at all. The month is almost over and I still have a large balance. At this rate I can live for several more months without a job.

Withdrawals

- 3-29-48. Cash to cover week-end trip to Las Vegas to start new original story in quiet surroundings. (business expense) 100.00
3-30-48. Expenses incurred unexpectedly at Flamingo Club. (Ran into L.M. who cashed my check) 2,000.00
3-31-48. Week end hotel bill at Last Frontier (incl. tips and extras) 70.00
4- 1-48. DEPOSIT: (from loan on automobile) 500.00
BALANCE IN CHECKING ACCOUNT 500.00

..... GENEVIEVE NOSSECK

The Short Play in Television

WILLIAM KOZLENKO

SWG member WILLIAM KOZLENKO is the former Editor of The One Act Play Magazine, as well as author and editor of twelve volumes of short plays.

IT was Gilbert Seldes who, in his capacity as director of Television Programs for Columbia Broadcasting System, declared that "the first impulse of anyone preparing to experiment in television programs is to fall down on his knees and thank heaven(and a few hundred dramatic writers) for the one act play."

When Mr. Seldes made this statement in 1938, television was truly in an experimental and exploratory stage. Since then time and experience have continued to verify the indispensable place which the short play occupies in video production.

It is no exaggeration to say that the short play, whether it emerges on film or is produced as a "live" show on the stage, is in fact the only dramaturgic form suitable for television. The reasons are many; but it will suffice to state only a few.

(I prefer to use the term short play instead of one-act play. A one-act play is invariably identified with a single scene and in length of performance it usually takes about fifteen minutes. Obviously, this tends to inhibit the imagination of the writer. There are plays that require one set and need only fifteen minutes for its presentation. On the other hand, a short play may be in several scenes and may take an hour to be performed. As such, the Greek plays, for instance, would hardly be classified as one-act plays; but they would certainly be categorized as short plays. Moreover, it isn't infrequent to see even a full-length play with a single set. In the long play the single set

is not only determined by the ensuing action; it is often a measure of practical economy.

In the short play the plurality of scenes is determined frequently by the dramatic content and idea of the play. Nevertheless, unity of impression takes precedence over unity of location. A play with a single set may be badly disjointed; while a multi-scene short play may possess a very tight unity.)

Dramaturgically, the short play—whether in one or more scenes—aims to produce a single dramatic effect with the greatest economy of means. The playwright has little time for lengthy exposition of story and characterization (and the pressure of time is, like in radio, also a considerable and important factor in television).

The projection of a single dramatic situation is in itself a summary of the accumulated results of many antecedent causes.

WHAT precisely is the place of the short play in television?

Since its inception video production has made enormous strides. The inevitable aspects of hit and miss have been corrected. The necessary flounderings attending any huge industry and collaborative art have been largely eliminated. Slowly and laboriously television has found and established its own unique techniques as they affect the writer, actor and director.

For the video writer now a televi-

sion "shooting" script is not a heterogeneous combination of diverse forms. Though he utilizes audio, visual and stage techniques (borrowing his terminology from radio, motion pictures and the theatre) his script has its own definite form.

Since television, however, is interrelated with the other writing forms, a knowledge of screenplay, radio and playwriting is of fundamental value.

It is truism to say that the development of any art or product is determined by the economic principle of supply and demand. When video production ultimately reaches its peak it will require an enormous amount of dramatic material. This varied material will be divided between "live" shows—variety programs, special educational acts, drama, comedy, dramatizations of commercial products—and film. Yes, film; which will be produced especially for video.

It might be said succinctly that the telefilm will be for television what the feature picture is for motion pictures and the recorded transcription is for radio. In a sense, the telefilm is a *visual* transcription of a play or a dramatic event which can be shown repeatedly in different places at different times long after the event itself has transpired.

Motion picture companies will come into being (there are several in business already) for no other purpose than to produce the telefilm.

Television stations will occasionally show regular feature pictures; but such a procedure will not be encouraged by the studios since it means

competition with their own movie houses. However, as the demand for televised programs increases the supply will have to keep apace. The prospects of teletheatres are therefore in the offing. These will be devoted exclusively to telefilm programs and the telecasting of on-the-spot news events.

Writing for the telefilm will differ little from the established screenplay technique. The chief difference will be in the length of the script. A telefilm script will hardly run to 140 pages which is the approximate length of a feature picture. Its length will conform more closely to the short play on the stage and to the "short" film.

The "short" film as it is produced today occupies a secondary place in a movie program. It is mainly a filler.

As such, well known actors and actresses are loath to appear in a movie short. It is easy to understand why since such pictures are produced with little artistic conscience and are received by the movie public with as little pleasure. In the main they add up, thus far, to so much wasted effort. Yet this need not be so, for the proper selection of dramatic material for film shorts could contribute an interesting portion to an evening's program. In fact, a happy idea for a motion picture might effectively prove more interesting when presented in a briefer form than when dragged out to fill two hours or more, especially when the story idea itself is unsuitable for extended treatment.

Pertaining to this it may be worthwhile to quote what Mr. Sam Marx, a producer at MGM, wrote in an article some years ago for *The One Act Play Magazine*.

"... If it is conceivable that a film can be produced from lines scrawled on the back of a postcard, it is conceivable that full-length pictures can be made from ideas and characters encompassed in a short play. Short plays are conceived around plots which point directly to a sharp central situation. Almost any compe-

tent screen writer will tell you that this is all he needs or wants for a good screenplay. . . ."

To emphasize his point, Mr. Marx cites *Bits of Life*, a picture made from a series of playlets "in the old silent days." It was what Hollywood called "a prestige picture," and looked upon as something of a stunt. It brought high critical praise, however, to director Marshall Neilan; and what is perhaps even more important it did terrific business at the boxoffice.

Years later another picture called *If I Had A Million* was also based on a group of one-act plays.

"It was so successful," continues Mr. Marx, "that it was surprising that Hollywood, usually so quick to imitate a money-making formula, did not follow this one up with many more." (Since then, however, there have been several more, specifically *Tales of Manhattan*, *The Long Voyage Home* based on Eugene O'Neill's group of sea-plays and, most recently, *A Miracle Can Happen*.)

ASIDE from the plentitude of story material latent in the vast store of short plays there is another important factor to consider regarding their use in pictures: that is economy in the costs of production without a corollary sacrifice of dramatic interest in the story itself.

Regarding this it seems astonishing that, being the shrewd business men they are, producers have not yet tapped the rich source of the short play for its dramatic idea, its concentration of story, and its economic costs in matters of production.

However, the screen writer need not wait until some enterprising producer discovers that a short-play film can be as entertaining and acceptable to the public as a feature picture.

We can be pretty certain that the short play—in the telefilm and on the stage—will never occupy a secondary place in television. It will, in fact, be video's dramatic mainstay. For though the telefilm will be compara-

tively short, as compared to the feature picture, it will be short only in footage, not in dramatic value.

With television the short play will step out of the amateur and semi-professional class, where it has needlessly been relegated for so many years, and attain the respect usually bestowed on a money-making product. And with respect will come renewed dramatic stature.

That this is already beginning to happen is evidenced by the Theatre Guild series on television, the Kraft Television Theatre, and the announcement that NBC will telecast 24 half-hour short dramas during the next six months. And this is just the beginning!

From the point of view of production economy, dramatic entertainment, the short play has finally come into its own.

It will probably be television that will establish a standard which motion pictures will inevitably follow. It seems quite likely that when a public discovers that the short play can be just as, and in some instances even more, entertaining than a long, drawn-out feature, it will demand that the motion picture studios also do more with the short play. And it is not too fanciful to predict that we will see "big name" stars in the telefilm long before they will consent to appear in movie "shorts."

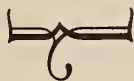
For the screen writer the telefilm will offer many opportunities for experimentation and activity. For the playwright the video stage will challenge him to create a new type of drama: the teleplay.

So don't sell the short play short. It looks as if it's going to help rejuvenate more than one major industry.

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Gunn Shots

(Continued from Inside Front Cover)

true. In my travels I have seldom seen a more democratic, not to say anarchistic, social set-up.

True, I have never made those intimate little dinners when ten or twelve cut-of-the-picture millionaires sit around discussing Eric Johnston and babies, and where the genial matron who makes \$400,000 a year as Vivian Starlight is demurely introduced as Mrs. Drumbecker, wife of the prominent pediatrician. On the other hand, I have never been hit over the head by invitations from the millionaires of New York, San Francisco, or Washington, and if I ever get to Palm Beach I do not expect Mrs. Stotesbury to meet me at the airport. But from time to time I have emerged from the Christian Science Reading Room and gone into more or less organized society and I hereby offer in evidence the guest list of a rather free-wheeling but snazzy soiree to which I was actually invited, along with the estimated figures on those assembled.

The Facts:

The clambake was jointly thrown by an actress (\$150,000 per picture), and a fairly successful publicity man (\$165 per week). The guest list was compiled from telephone numbers written on old envelopes, ticket stubs, bar checks, and even address books. The police were not called.

Those Present:

- 1 actress so successful that she is into her studio for \$40,000 in advances.
- 1 actor so ditto that he is into his agent for \$20,000.
- 1 actress (supporting) at \$50,000 per picture, with a friend from Bakersfield.
- 1 actress (star), at \$30,000 per picture (this is the kind of thing that confuses people), with her boyfriend, a radio writer.
- 1 actress (supporting) at \$400 a week, with her husband, who was last paid by the U. S. Navy.

- 1 actor, with accent, who has made exactly one picture since V-E Day and is thinking seriously of getting into another line.
- 5 former stock players, male and female, all unemployed since the Great Panic, none of whom ever made more than \$300, top.
- 1 actor who came out for an unsuccessful test in 1944 and has remained unemployed ever since, with the best damned tailor in town (this is baffling, but not uncommon).
- 7 writers (1 at \$2000, a married team at \$1500, 2 around \$500, 2 Social Security).
- 1 writer-producer, who took a \$100 drop from his writer's salary to achieve the double honor, and wishes he hadn't.
- 3 maintained ladies, of hugely varying degrees of success.
- 1 lady so chic that she has lived sumptuously off her creditors for twenty-five years, with her ghost writer, who gets peanuts.
- 2 studio secretaries.
- 1 dance director, at a fancy figure.
- 2 dancers, male and female, at no figure.
- 1 mousy little girl whose grandfather made it in oil, with an unemployed actor.
- 1 second-string movie columnist, female, with an unemployed actor.
- 1 lady anthropologist, with an unemployed actor.
- 4 very important-looking executives, one of whom gets a really stupendous amount, and two of whom never made more than \$500 in their lives, though they would lie on hot nails rather than admit it.
- 6 publicity people, ranging from \$350 to \$38.47.
- 1 director, temporarily considered a has-been though he has previously made two comebacks, last paid \$75,000 per picture.
- 1 dialogue director, who is supposed to direct his first picture any day now, at \$350.
- 1 agent, shoestring.
- 1 agent, unemployed.
- 3 cutters, including one who has

worked as an extra since you know when.

- 1 night-club photographer, female, at \$50 per week.
- 1 night-club dark-room man, at \$60.
- 3 former actors who have gone into ceramics.
- 8 wives, weirdly assorted.
- 6 miscellaneous relatives, all of whom have been on the inactive list longer than Calvin Coolidge.
- 1 studio messenger girl, who snubbed me.

And if anyone thinks that this was such a mad Bohemian revel that all social and financial barriers were tossed aside, I can only report that the big moment of the evening came when a couple who had been divorced six years unexpectedly met face to face. The hostess collapsed in embarrassment, and the entire company dithered in a pious confusion that would have done justice to Dry Rustle, Kansas.

Come to think of it, in comparison Bucks County is downright fascistic.



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E D I T O R I A L

THE recent membership meeting was called to consider a resolution duly signed by fifty active members of the Guild. This resolution was a direct censure of the Executive Board. Its first section would have rescinded the specific course of action which the Board had chosen as a means of carrying out the will of the membership, i.e., the contract with Judge Thurman Arnold. The second part would have seriously restricted the future actions of the Board as the governing body of the Guild.

That the entire resolution was defeated by a clear majority in a democratic vote of the membership is naturally a source of gratification to the present Board. But an examination of the vote is rather disturbing. A total of 236 votes were cast against the resolution and 164 in favor of it. Of the 164 members who voted to reprimand the Board, only 24 were present at the meeting.

The problem of proxies is a vexing one and a completely satisfactory solution is not simple. But it is somewhat disheartening to realize that 140 members were willing to vote by proxy to condemn the Board's action without taking the trouble to attend the meeting and hear both sides of the issue. Added emphasis is given to this by the fact that subsequent interviews have made it clear that many of those who gave their proxies in support of this resolution did so on the basis of erroneous and incomplete information.

The Executive Board meets regularly at 1655 No. Cherokee Avenue, not on Mt. Olympus. A careful scrutiny of its actions by the membership is both democratic and healthy. But it is difficult to find any justification for the large number of members who were willing to censure its actions without any real understanding of the issues involved.

... VALENTINE DAVIES.

Correspondence

Mrs. Alice Penneman, Exec. Secretary
Screen Writers' Guild
1655 N. Cherokee
Hollywood, California

Re: Ralph J. Burns vs. Twentieth
Century-Fox Film Corp.

Copyright suit re: *The Miracle*
on 34th Street.

Dear Mrs. Penneman:

By decision dated February 27, 1948, the U. S. District Court of the District of Massachusetts decided the above entitled case in favor of Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. The Court denied entirely Mr. Burns' claim that our motion picture infringed his copyright in the novel *Angel On Horseback*. The opinion of the Court among other things states: "I find as a fact that the substance of the motion picture was derived from a manuscript which Valentine Davies prepared at least as early as July 1945 before Plaintiff had finished his book."

Costs and attorneys fees were assessed against the Plaintiff. The Plaintiff, of course has the right of appeal but the odds are long that he would accomplish nothing by appealing, in view of the above quoted finding of the District Court upon the question of priority.

The fact that the Court emphasized July 1945 attests to the extreme value of Screen Writers Guild registration in cases involving alleged copyright infringement. We greatly appreciate your cooperation in this case.

Regards,

GEO. WASSON

By

ROBERT H. PATTON

The letter above is printed for the information of Guild members because it appears to be an outstanding example of a clear-cut legal victory which resulted from the use of the

Guild's Manuscript Registration Service.

As a footnote, I might add that inasmuch as the original registration covered two separate properties, the picture and the book of *Miracle*, both of which were in current circulation, the studio, the publishers and all concerned were anxious to protect its future legal value. For this reason, the original envelope was opened only in the course of a deposition which was taken pursuant to a court order. After the original manuscript had been photostated, it was returned to the Guild together with a letter from the Court Reporter setting forth the Court Order and the Deposition under which the original envelope was opened. This letter, together with the original manuscript and the original envelope, were placed in a new sealed envelope and re-registered with the Guild.

This procedure should afford the maximum protection to the future legal value of the original registration.

VALENTINE DAVIES

★

Editor

The Screen Writer

Dear Sir:

One of the many totalitarian methods to get rid of a political opponent is to deprive him of his livelihood. It seems to me that my eight colleagues ostracized by Parnell Thomas and the two hundred Czech film workers fired by the new Prague government for their "negative attitude" are victims of the same enemy. (The Czech film industry being about a fiftieth of ours in size, the Hollywood equivalent of the Prague mass-firing would be ten thousand rendered jobless for political reasons.)

Despite our deep sympathy for them, the SWG cannot help our Czech comrades; we can, I hope, help the eight American writers. I suggest however, that they'd facilitate our task by declaring their solidarity with their fellow victims overseas. It can not be that the same thing that is wrong in Hollywood, should, multiplied by 1250—be right in Prague.

Very sincerely yours,

FRANZ SPENCER

Editor

The Screen Writer

Dear Sir:

Like the *Le Lapin Agile* of Picasso in Montmartre or the *Cupole* of Hemingway in Montparnasse or the *Deux Magots* of Sartre near Saint-Germain-des-Pres, *Simon's Drive-In*, in the neighborhood of the University of Southern California Cinema Department, serves as the Bohemian, sidewalk cafe stamping grounds for a young student group of self-styled "Celluloid Intellectuals."

Sitting there at noon and leaning across tables heaped with hamburgers, salted-down French fries, apple pie, and coffee, these "would-be" writers, directors, producers, artists, cameramen—geniuses all—cut loose daily on the cinematic world of make-believe. Every film play recorded on celluloid, from *Fred Ott's Sneeze*, to *Gentleman's Agreement*, comes up for its respective tongue-lashing by these bleary-eyed lens gazers. Their gods are Melies, Griffith, Eisenstein, Lubitsch, Dupont, Murnau, Pabst, Von Stroheim, Claire, Chaplain, Disney, Toland, Howe, Freund, Nichols.

A few weeks ago, Gene, chubby, and cherubic in his Army Air Corps jacket, leaned back in his chair and,

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grinning like the freckle-faced kid on a fresh-white-bread ad, slapped his copy of *The Screen Writer* against the table. French fries flew in all directions.

"This is it, men," he said excitedly. "This is the day you've been waiting for. Get a load of Pirosh's article, will ya? At the Cinema School in France students like us work side by side with professional directors, writers, cameramen. — And pipe this! — 'The diploma comes in the form of a union card!'" He tossed the magazine on the table. Eager hands pounced on it.

The article started them griping. They griped that although they were young and eager and willing, that although they ate, slept, studied, lived and breathed cinema, the Hollywood studios *and* the unions had shut them out completely and forever—even the best of them.

But because they were young, out of their griping came their hopes and dreams. And, oddly enough, they were all turned to foreign lands—not only to France, but to England, India, Africa, Italy, Mexico, Egypt, and Argentina.

Gene summed it up like this: "The Hollywood studios may be less than a half hour's drive from here, but remember, that's for tourists. For us, they've set up a slight detour to the moon!"

Respectfully,
ARTHUR L. SWERDLOFF

★

THE RADIO WRITERS GUILD
of the
Authors' League of America, Inc.
Hollywood

Alice Penneman
Screen Writers' Guild
Dear Alice:

Within the past few months a number of members of the SWG have turned to radio writing. From time to time we receive calls from screen writers inquiring about RWG minimums, rights, etc. On the other hand, there have been instances where screen writers have written for radio programs and have not received the full benefits of the Minimum Basic Agreement which we signed last October.

This has unquestionably been due to the fact that those screen writers have not been aware of the provisions of the contract and the general rules of the RWG.

Because of the nature of radio writing it is rather difficult for the Guild to keep track of every deal entered into by writers. Where we have contracts we can enforce them since the facts are more available than otherwise. But, even in those instances the writer is in a stronger position when he is cognizant of the terms of the MBA.

We therefore urge that you suggest to your membership that they check with the RWG office before they conclude any contracts for radio writing. Membership in RWG is open to those who fulfill the qualifications.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL DAVIDSON

Executive Secretary

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Stratford-on-Avon Reporter 'JULIUS CAESAR' DANDY THRILLER

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Sept. 22, 1599

JULIUS CAESAR

(Globe Theatre)

Ye new production put together by the Globe Theatre Group from Stratford on Avon is poetic action melodrama. The story of politics in high places and political assassination has pinko tendencies, but astute direction and production has restrained wild script writing.

As presented, ye pro-Roman propaganda is soft-pedaled by shrewd Producer Keene, and Director Trilby. "Julius Caesar" is their mutual triumph. Anthony Keene's production values were thoroughly realized and ye Anthony Keene expert hand was obvious in the splendid trappings. Handicapped though he was by ye script, Tom Trilby's direction dominated the exciting presentation. Time after time ye magic directorial "touches" lifted commonplace words. Director Trilby is to be congratulated for his creation of ye Marc Anthony eulogy over Caesar's body, and for many other such directorial touches.

The props were a delight to behold. Whoever thought of using ye knives to murder Caesar—whether it be Producer Keene or Director Trilby deserves much praise. The cast left nothing to be desired. Richard Burbridge dominated the stage in the character he created of Marc Anthony. His ad-libs saved many a scene. Such ad libs as "Friends, Romans, and Countrymen, lend me your ears," brought down ye first day audience. Will Fadden was just as powerful in his studied portrayal of Marcus Brutus. Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, was charmingly painted and given to ye adoring public by Mr. John Beckett.

As usual, ye costuming by Jack Archer showed the calves and chests of the Globe Company to best advantage while preserving the toga quality called for by Anthony Keene's fine direction. While she had no part of the proceedings on the stage, Ann Pickett's selling of oranges in the pit contributed much to the gaiety of the presentation.

It is to be hoped that Producer Trilby,

Director Keene, and Actor Burbridge will collaborate on more of these productions. These three geniuses are fashioning ye distinguished places for themselves in stage history. They will be remembered long after ye poor addle pated scribes are dust and forgotten.

EDMUND HARTMANN, the well known collector of theater lore, came across this musty review in a mouldering trunk. Tucked away with the lacepiece of some long-forgotten mummer, it offers sorry evidence that writers have long been unheralded, unmourned—and unmentioned.

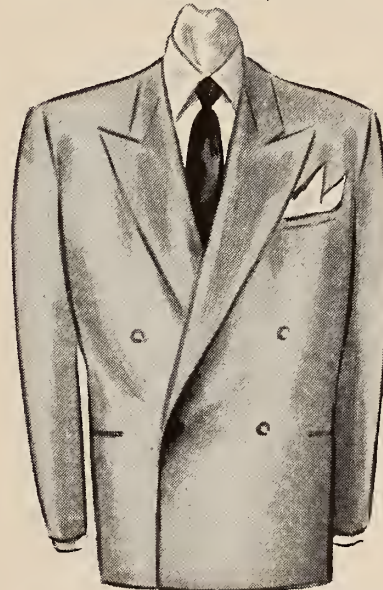
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Book Reviews

By STEPHEN LONGSTREET

THE WRITER AS A PICTURE-MAKER

HAS any screen writer living yet gone into a story conference, and after the groaning over the income tax, the hangover and the latest agent's story, has there not been that moment when the producers having tenderly laid down their dollar cigars, said something like this: "The trouble with you writer fellas is you think in words . . . always words. Mind you, very good words, but you don't really see things in pictures. Directors, cameramen, actors, we work with pictures, but you writer fellas . . . it's always words. You got no showmanship, no understanding of picture values . . . you writer fellas." And so on until it's time to taste the chicken soup in the studio commissary.

There is, of course, no truth in this often repeated canard that writers think only in words; it is as unfair as saying race horses are produced only to think in hay. The truth is that producers feel the writer is an alien in their midst, because he is an independent craftsman who, using only his mind, is capable, without the aid of cameras, developing, cutting, editing, exploiting, advertising and merchandising to produce a story from his fingertips, or the end of his tongue.

The best writers, of course, are master makers of pictures. Charles Dickens drew like a cartoonist in prose, his great gallery of characters are living pictures, so well done that we often forget the prose screen through which we have to see. Hudson in *Green Mansions*, *The Purple Land*, and other books, is a landscape painter

as fine as Corot, or Cezanne, as detailed as a Dutch seascape, as alive and alert and daring as Turner's most glowing sunset. Joseph Conrad could paint murals as lush and tropical as Rivera, and every writer worth his typewriter ribbon is capable of making pictures; the better the pictures (the better his images of black marks on paper), when made into motion pictures. It is true, as we get into the groove, we sometimes blur the images we create, that often, after a series of efforts, we nod and fall into the formula of doing not new and daring pictures, but fragments cut from old canvas the producers desire us to copy.

As the art of the motion picture changes, the value of seeing old films retreats into a remembered past, where they are better than they actually appear when re-run. Underlighting, improved makeup, faster and wider lens, and all the mobility of the camera as we see it used today, makes old films merely historic, and soon worth only a place in our culture as museum bait. There is no use drooling over *Greed* or *The Thief of Bagdad*; they are pretty dated products, powerful in their day, but as stale as mustache cups today.

Where then can a writer refresh his picture taste, develop his eye, see life and its stories in compositions and groupings that are images that make for better motion pictures? The source is, and remains, the work of great painters. In our age the printing press and the color plate have made such progress that the lives and works of great artists are ours, at any good book store. Writers need such ma-

terial, for writers are often seduced by the illustration or story painting, in which the technique of painting, and the form and theory of art is overlooked. Also, the writer can only train his eye to observe significant form if he knows what all the shouting is about from Crete icons to Picasso's tormented forms.

As a refresher course in picture thinking I would like to speak of some books all writers should dig their mind and eyes into (also all directors, actors and producers, who need a little professional knowledge of the science of picture forms, even *more* than writers).

Best of the painters who saw in people not merely forms or objects to render only as techniques of style, was Constantin Guys; a man of whom little is known, and whose drawings of street crowds, parades, horses, carriages, processions, gay ladies, tarts and society queens has influenced many in our times. Such different peepers into our society as Peter Arno, and the fashion drawings of *Vogue*. Guys was a man of mystery who spent most of his time in underworld dives and in high society, in the barracks of gentlemen officers of good regiments, and who drew from memory everything he saw, in a very brilliant style. As far as I know he never signed a drawing, but no Guys' drawing ever needs to be identified in that way to be known. He covered, as a staff artist, the Crimea War for the *London Illustrated News* and did some of the greatest scenes of carnage since Goya. Translated, unfortunately, into formal wood engraving by other artists on the *London*

Illustrated News they often look oddly and perversely polite. The book of his drawings, edited by C. Geoffrey Holme, is a rare treat. It contains the famous essay on *Guys* by his close friend and fellow gutter wallower, Baudelaire. *Peintre de la Ve Moderne*. The translation is only fair, but worth trying.

IF your French is still serviceable, with just a few holes that you can throw Balzac through, try reading *Jerome Bosch* by Jacques Combe, in an edition by Pierre Tisne, Paris, 1946. Some copies of this book have been imported. Bosch is the greatest painter of fantasy of all times. A product of the Middle Ages, with a mind tormented by heaven and hell, demons, fiends and the cruelty of man to man because of personal aversions of Christ, he was very real to his times. He is the first, and the best, surrealist painter. A striking genius among the so many false tones of art. Dali is feeble and sterile when compared to Bosch, and the imagination of this modern Spaniard is such ordinary trash—merely chic jigsaw puzzles, when one sees the hundreds of paintings and drawing in this book on Bosch. Many of them are in fine color. The world of Bosch—I warn you—is hard to take. It is the world beneath the skin, it is the world of fragments of faith and disease, of luxury, gluttony and fear. Death is king, death is the ruler, the gambler, the dice player, and in every moment of every corner of every crowded painting and drawing there is a fearful sermon on the shortness of life, and the unevenness of just placid existence. These are not just conventional sermons; this is the pageant of one man's fearful journey through life, clearly seen. Painting has produced few men of the size of Jerome Bosch; his vision at first appears purely personal, yet he pictures his era, and somehow, in the terror of his frenzy, and his mutilations of changing and shifting faiths, I think he predicts our fearful times.

MIER-GRAEFE'S great work, *Vincent Van Gogh*, is too little known. Translated from a stainless-

steel German, it is a monument and a milestone in the history of modern art. Too much has been made of the mad mind of the painter himself, and not enough of the vision, the text and content of what Van Gogh tried to say, and how he said it. Someone once said that Corot showed us how to really see trees, and Turner taught us how to see a landscape. "Nature always imitates art," said Wilde. It is certainly true that some painters give us new eyes. Van Gogh put certain greens, yellows and blues into our drab lives. Now everyone can see them; but once the world was all a brown gravy sauce in color, and you will not believe that up until 1840 green grass in art was almost unknown. A blue or purple shadow was enough to ruin a painter for life. Today, for example, how many of us really see California? Must it always be a picture postal card sunset, a Laguna art shoppe full of old ladies' watercolors of desert flowers? Someday we shall have a California Van Gogh, and what a vista he shall open for us blind people, right here on a golden coast. I wish he would hurry; cactus garden art can be a little trying.

THE *Journal of Eugene Delacroix* appeared in the original French in three huge volumes. A translation came out some ten years ago, but no one read it. Now Crown has published a one volume edition that is a beautiful thing to see and read. Delacroix was a romantic who had seen the glowing paintings of Constable and Turner. He invented, with some borrowing, a new way to see the world. No longer did he want Greek statues with skins the color of soap, or tragic poses in polite moods, reenacting polite rapes among models posing as Roman movie stars or goddesses. We owe to Delacroix a great deal. He certainly made the modern nude a sensual thing, perhaps a little too sensual, being a romantic bachelor. He was, unfortunately, the DeMille of his times, and he used his wonderful colors in some of the biggest battle and rape and slaughter paintings since Rubens. In his way he was a Technicolor version of Rubens, and his paint-

ings strike us, now, as a little old-fashioned; like a release of say, the movie, *The Ten Commandments*, or *The Sign of the Cross*. But in his time, Delacroix was a great influence on the young men who were to blind the world with the glory of impressionism, and his journal is one of the few examples of a painter who was also a fine writer. His mind is worth walking with.

TO me, the most wonderfully written of all books by painters is Camille Pissarro's *Letters To His Son Lucien*. It is a classic (and like all real classics, unknown and unread). Pissarro was an old Jew with an old white beard (even in his youth he must have been old) and from his face kindness and magic and love is always peering. He writes like an angel with talent, and these letters written only for a loved son in England, are among the finest writings in all literature. There is no posing, no gulf of intolerance and fatherly sternness between the man and the letters. The tragic-happy story of a painter with a huge family, and no market for his wonderful paintings, is so beautiful to read — and must have taken so much courage to live through. Pissarro has waited a long time to become famous. Now that he is safely dead, his paintings bring sixty and a hundred thousand dollars each to art dealers; those feeders on the meat and marrow of dead craftsmen. The Edward G. Robinson collection of paintings in Beverly Hills, that most of you may have seen, contains that wonderful *Paris Street Scene* the old man painted while his family went hungry, when blindness tried to prick out his eyes, and only the warm faith of art covered the cold body of a very great artist and sheltered a wonderful, old, old man against the bitterness of this world. Pissarro never gave way to despair and cheap cynicism. Everyone loved him . . . even those early Bund members, Degas and Cezanne.

CEZANNE is an odd duck in the world of painting that has taken in many a warped misfit before. One of the few decent books about him

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is Gerstle Mack's *Paul Cezanne*. Mack is a little dull, and a little dry, and rather a bore about details that no one wants to hear, but he has dug into the myth and method of the great master. It is hard — I warn you — to accept Cezanne as a master at first glance. But a first glance at anything is worthless. It takes time to see the world of Paul Cezanne . . . but once you see it, most of the other art of the world looks as if made from colored jello. Cezanne brought form back into art after the healthy debauch of the impressionists, who frolicked in the sun so much that they almost destroyed the solid and real shape of things. Not that Cezanne in his use of color and a rigid control of form could always paint what he wanted. Sometimes only one apple in a still life pleased him. And there is the stale story (we critics repeat) of the forty sittings he gave a man and then said, well the shirt front isn't so bad. But in the end Cezanne destroyed every stale art professor, every dead as dust professor, every professor who could not see beyond his dusty glasses. He is no painter for people who know *what* they like . . . he is the artist who is for people who know *why* they like. All pioneers are so busy inventing they have no time to make things conventionally beautiful. That comes from their followers. Cezanne could not paint the human nude figure calmly. It excited him so that a stripped model made his nose bleed. His famous bathers appear often to be a child's joke in a drawing class . . . yet when you understand that he was interested in composition and form and if the people, or the apples, didn't fit he pulled them around until they did, you begin to understand a little of what he tried to say. One does not sit down at a piano and play Bach without years of training, one does not learn one and one are two and understand Einstein overnight. So it is with Cezanne. A little study and a long time of looking and one day you'll toss your Grant Wood and Tom Benton into the ash can.

I would like to offer *The Hunted and the Hunter* by Sacheverell Sitwell as something odd. This is a book

about art and the art fringe. I think. I'm not sure what it's about. I don't think old Sach Mouth, the Mayfair Butterfly, knows either, but it's remarkably rich and ornate reading. The ornaments of culture seem odd sometimes, and then for some reason they form a pattern, a clue to what some of us thought and felt. *The Hunters and the Hunted* is a book of clues, a book of patterns that I enjoyed reading. The going is not easy but it's tasty, the prose is as loaded as an ad in a trade journal by Jerry Wald, re-writing the Old Testament in Burbank, but there is beauty and oddness and some hint of the secret corners of life we keep hidden away. I can only say perhaps the world will look a little different to you after this book. Having seen some other sides of the picture, here is a rare view of its daffy face.

THERE are new editions of John Addington Symond's masterpiece, *Michelangelo*. And the Oxford Press volume of photographs of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel is again in print.

The first sight of the chapel is no esthetic delight—it is little more than a stone barn erected by Pope Sixtus IV.

Inside—and I can remember my delight at the sight, the world of Michelangelo, Buonarroti comes leaping and twitching to life.

The Sistine Chapel had stood the change in Europe well. The gods and bodies brushed on by Michelangelo still flew in space from its ceilings. The Sistine Chapel is the Pope's private Chapel in the Vatican Palace, but somehow Michelangelo's markings on the great barrel vault have escaped from the keeping of one man and gone out into the world. Reproductions do not serve. They have a false satiating value. The ceiling is needed to show off these dreadful and powerful gods, cavorting in a rocky void with thunder of purpose and awe-inspiring shock, as man breaks out of lethargy into a sense of the inevitable.

There are other works around — frescoes by Botticelli and Ghirlandaio,

Signorelli and Perugino and others—but I do not remember them. The ceiling is too bold, too strong, too much above mere paint on plaster for me to remember what else is on the walls. The rest are merely abortive platitudes.

The Sistine Chapel is long and narrow and very high. Twice I had stood here thinking of the painter at work. Flat on his back, Michelangelo, painting *fresco buono* (that is brushing ground color into wet lime), worked out the world of Creation, and all the heroes of what men once held sacred, before the race fell from grace and into the paths of tanks and voices like hot dung burning.

The color is not important. The tones are earth and olive. They have been mutilated by retouching, restoring and by a gunpowder explosion in 1798 that wiped out almost completely some of the seated nude figures. (I do not know what gunpowder was doing in the Pope's private Chapel, unless he was experimenting with firecrackers. In China the priests are great lovers of firecrackers and are experts in their construction.)

Great cumbrous cracks run across the ceiling. Iron clamps hold part of the vaulting in place. The retoucher has almost covered some of the figures, until they are no longer Michelangelo—yet that ceiling glows with a cold beauty to set all honest men, who see it, stirring in ferment at something noble—an idea that they, too, are made in the images of those great beings that float above them. It is self-flattery of a harmless sort, being part of that ingenious awe.

A great many people come to look at the Sistine Chapel. Germans with their damn cameras and Italians crossing themselves at the symbols (for they can't very well understand the art, being mostly women in black—tired, child-bearing women come to have a few private words with Him). Americans stand impressed, Englishmen nod to one another. Only the Germans talk art jargon.

God divides the Light from the Darkness swirling in smooth action

His wonders to perform. He creates the Sun and the Moon (in foreshortening that is a miracle in itself). His angels rush to follow His order. The beard of God is long and beautiful, His hands are hands of work and creations, and His nude little angels swirl in His draperies as the Sun shines at His orders. The plausible ingenious arrangements swim on overhead. But not a note of music is heard.

Calmer now, hands before Him, God divides the Waters from the Earth. This is not a painting but a sketch of God as the artist saw Him one day, in a trance, or in a personal interview—for God is good to artists. He does not feed them or give them wealth but He will sit and talk with them, and if they are smart they will sketch Him when they can.

Here is God with a still image—The Creation of Man. Adam lies naked on the rock of the new Earth. He is big-boned and tired with the process of being created, and God's finger breathes life into the noble frame, while His angels hide in His great cloak, wondering if perhaps He is making a mistake in giving this thing Life in His own image.

An auspicious beginning. But God stands now, and from the ribs of the sleeping Adam a Woman appears—a Woman with a great belly and big thighs, the mother of all races. Not a little tart by Botticelli, or one of Titian's beautiful whores—but a creature of sorrow and strength and, of course, weakness. She is not pretty, this Eve, but Michelangelo never painted a pretty woman in his life.

His beauty is all in his huge nude youths—a sickeningly sweet beauty—at times a little cloying, a little evil (*that* tells the secret of the painter). But his Eve is a noble thing. She stands almost emerged from the body of Adam, bent unsteadily forward on limbs still new to life, accepting fate solidly.

Swiftly follow the Fall of Man and The Expulsion, and so into the Great Flood that wiped out the sins of mankind—and wiped out Man, too, all except Noah.

Around the ceiling are seated huge nudes with big bodies and small feminine-looking heads. The human body has become a series of poems here. The heads are too small, too sweet and evil, but the bodies are what matter—swift poetry to the noble prose of the ceiling story. They sit there, eternal.

Greatest of all things here are the Judges. They sit brooding over the ways of the world, and from their faces one can see that nothing good is in store for mankind. *Make the bed for Attila*, the fever sings. Jonah is leaning back; Daniel, solid as a mountain, keeps his records; Isaiah and Joel are furrowed of brow as they sit thinking, burning of an inner conflagration. Zachariah is very old and beyond the passions of youth—old, cold wisdom is his.

Jeremiah sits, a great hand across his mouth, looking sadly down, and he is very tired of telling us that we shall bring disaster and trouble upon God's good world, and that he is through shouting, and now, almost without hope. Ezekiel can still be excited and he will argue any point, and the Erythraean Sibyl—not a woman but a machine—points to her book, and a wide-eyed Delphic Sibyl, and an aged Cumaeon Sibyl brood, and like not the taste of things to come, as people stand under them munching chocolate bars.

There are others, all large and brooding, all sad. For a few hundred years men and women have come here, and looked up, and nothing much has been done to prove these figures wrong. Ruined, impotent, derelict, Europe still stares up.

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News Notes

Harold Goldman's *The Key in the Lock*, originally published in *This Week* and republished by the Toronto *Star*, has been selected as one of the twelve detective stories for inclusion in *The Best Detective Stories of 1947*, the yearly collection published by Dutton's.

★

SWG members, George B. Seitz, Jr., DeVallon Scott, Charles Green, Jr., and Edward Bock, writers for Apex Film Corporation, have been flown to northern Alaska by the Strategic Air Command of the United States Air Forces to prepare screenplays for a series of films concerning polar air operations.

★

Jerry Fairbanks has bought, for immediate production, four original screenplays written by Robert Stephen Brode. They are: *The Missing Hour*; *The Talking Horseshoe*; *The Shattered Mirror* and *The Surprised Corpse*. These are to be turned into films for relay via television.

★

Limbo, a musical fantasy for which Irving Phillips did the book and lyrics, and Albert Hay Malotte the score, has been purchased by Eddie Dowling for immediate production. Dramatic Publishing Co. is publishing Mr. Phillips' play, *The Bing Bang Bush*, which is also being produced by the Columbia University Little Theatre Group.

★

Leo Mittler, Hollywood writer-director, will teach at the Experimental Film Studio in the Dramatic Workshop Film Department of the New School for Social Research in New York. Mittler, who is also General Manager of the Dramatic Workshop, has inaugurated the Film Department. Already five new courses have had to be added to the original five.

★

SWG member Milton M. Raison,

and William S. Dutton, now writing a documentary on the Duponts for Jack Chertok, have sold a story called *Hard Rock Nettie—Queen of the Powder Kings* to the *Saturday Evening Post*. It is based on material Raison dug up while doing research on powder men for his forthcoming Paramount picture *Dynamite*.

★

Irving Shulman's second novel *You Can't Live Alone* has been accepted for publication by The Dial Press, New York. Mr. Shulman is writing two additional novels which will carry on the story of *The Amboy Dukes*, his first novel, published by Doubleday & Company.

★

American rights to *Children of Vienna* (Robert Neumann) and *They Got What They Wanted* (Louis D'Alton), have been acquired by Eugen Sharin to be produced in association with Bernard Goodman.

★

For his scripting of *The Burning Cross*, The Interracial United Awards Committee, sponsored by the International Film & Radio Guild, Inc., selected Aubrey Wisberg, the Unity Award winner for 1947.

★

Charles Grayson, whose last novel was *Angel Town*, has a new one just out, *The Broken Gate* (Doubleday & Company). He gathered first-hand the background material on Indo-China, employing the ferment beneath the

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surface all over the east as an exciting under-current theme of his novel.

★

The personal diaries of Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels, considered the most revealing inside story of Nazi officialdom to come out of Germany, and edited and translated by Louis P. Lochner, will be published by Doubleday April 29th. *The Goebbels Diaries* is the May selection of The Book of the Month Club and will be distributed to its members during the latter part of April.

★

Richard G. Hubler's *The Quiet Kingdom* has as its setting, an imaginary island somewhere in the Caribbean. This first novel has just been published by Rinehart & Company.

★

★ SWG member Don Martin's first novel *Shed No Tears*, was published by Murry and Gee during March. Book was sold to Robert Frost Productions from galley proofs and has recently been completed for an Eagle-Lion release.

★

★ In a deep footlight bow to California's coming Centennial, Pasadena Playhouse announces the 14th annual Midsummer Drama Festival, July 6 to August 24, as "Favorite Plays of the Gold Coast Days," recreating a list of eight famous playbills that were popular during the gold rush days.

The plays, each with particular historic or theatrical significance will be *Lady of Lyons*, by Bulwer-Lytton, *The Honeymoon*, by John Tobin, *The Marble Heart*, by Charles Selby, *London Assurance*, by Dion Boucicault, *Damon and Pythias* by John Banim, *Fanchon the Cricket*, by August Waldauer from the George Sand novel, *Fashion* by Anna Cora Mowatt and *Camille* by Dumas in the Matilda Heron version.

Research by Huntington Library and Playhouse sought variety and authenticity in the slate, and the Playhouse, as honorary State Theatre of California, will devote the Festivals of 1948-'49 and '50 to early California times, plays and playwrights.

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Following are excerpts from a symposium by leading members of the British Screenwriters' Association, on British film conditions — past and sometimes still unfortunately present—which appeared recently in the *Kinematograph Weekly*.

Script Conference

In a recent questionnaire organized by the Screenwriters' Association, scriptmen voted the eight greatest obstacles to successful screenwriting as follows: 1, The employment of too many writers on one script (41 per cent). 2, Lack of publicity or reference by critics to the writer of a film (41 per cent). 3, Unlimited dictation by producer, director, etc., in the writing of a script (32 per cent). 4, Lack of encouragement for original screen stories; preference for adaptations of successes in other media (19 per cent). 5, Absence of the writer from floor during shooting (13 per cent). 6, Lack of sufficient liaison between writer and director (11 per cent). 7, The habit of calling in big names from other media who are not experienced in writing for the screen (11 per cent). 8, Lack of recognized training for screenwriters (10 per cent).

On these pages screenwriters have been invited to lay down pens and pick up axes to grind.

By FRANK LAUNDER

BEFORE we can hope successfully to expand British film production we must learn to make better use of the talented and experienced writers already in the industry, and to introduce new writers who are prepared to devote themselves to writing films. Hitherto when there has been any expansion in the industry it has been carried out in a recklessly profligate, not to say cock-eyed, manner. With notable exception, producers, and many others in the industry—for producers are by no means the only offenders — fail to appreciate that writing is the raw material of films. They look upon writers as labourers in the vineyard, whereas in fact they are vines themselves.

When I first entered the industry as a struggling lad many moons ago I was naive enough to believe that the overwhelming importance to films of writing would be apparent to the meanest intelligence. I was quickly disillusioned. Since then, together with my fellow-screenwriters, I have been monotonously propagating this obvious truth. I am happy to say it is beginning to penetrate. Annually—usually around Christmas—it bursts on some film executive like a blinding light,

and he rushes into print with his great discovery; about once every six months a film critic mentions a writer's name; and on occasions we have been known to receive a distant nod from a trade union official.

The sky is brightening.

By JACK WHITTINGHAM

THIS is a begging letter. It is written on behalf of a fellow of usually rather unpresentable appearance, who has little to say for himself when you first meet him. His name is Original Story.

He has none of the face value of his elderly and sometimes ancient relations, those exacting, sometimes uncompromising celebrities, Successful Play and Famous Novel. Yet, he is more adaptable; he can suit himself to any company; his outlook is fresh and modern; above all, he is not a chatter-box like Successful Play, nor full of preconceived ideas like Famous Novel.

The plea is that Original Story should be given more and more encouragement; he needs it desperately. Without encouragement, he wilts. He is shy: he has been snubbed too often. But with a little trust and help he has blossomed under such creditable

alibis as *In Which We Serve*, *The Way to the Stars*, *Colonel Blimp*, *The Captive Heart*, *Hue and Cry*, *Holiday Camp*.

It needs courage to go ahead on the development of an original story, when sometimes the idea is contained in little more than a sentence. It needs imagination, patience. It is a gamble. Above all, it needs trust in writers. But courage, imagination, patience, the willingness to take a chance, and to trust, more than often have their own reward.

By BRIDGET BOLAND

WE are all in danger of becoming hacks. Though our position is better than it was before the war, we are still given story after story to adapt, often brilliantly conceived for some other medium, but inevitably all more or less ill-suited to the cinemas. After a few years we have learned a great deal about the technique of the screen, but we have practically lost the ability to write for it, except in so far as we still annoy the people who "liked the book" by allowing a scene or two of our own to slip in under our guard.

It is obviously not practical politics at the moment to urge working screen-

writers to go away and write full-length screenplays "on spec"—a thing which, indeed, only the very well-situated or chronically unemployed can afford to do in the present state of demand.

The solution lies with the producers.

Producers are a courageous body, who will risk buying a novel with absolutely nothing to recommend it as screen material, except that its prose style or its bold inclusion of scenes that will never get past the censor have resulted in the sale of x-thousand copies, and with flattering faith they will turn it over to us to turn into a motion picture. It should surely take less courage to back their own judgment of the film possibilities of a forty-page original screen story. The few that have been made (mostly during the war, when the industry had no time to wait for the novelists) have nearly always been successful.

Shakespeare, of course, did not often get to write original stories, either; but, then, so few of us write like Shakespeare in any other way that this is small consolation.

By J. B. WILLIAMS

THE Dalton tax, or whatever takes its place, is bound to give British film production an opportunity it has never had before. Can we rise to it? I don't believe we can unless the present appalling cost of production is somehow stemmed. A film which would have cost £50,000 in 1939 now costs something like £300,000. Box-office takings have not risen at anything like the same rate; and, while the tendency is for costs to rise still higher, takings are beginning to fall.

Studio time is the bugbear. A film which should have taken eight weeks in 1939 now takes 13 or 14 weeks, or even longer. Not only does this raise costs; it also means that full use is not being made of available studio space. Where two films might be made we are getting only one.

I don't propose to enter into the bitter wrangle about the many things which are supposed to be responsible, such as increased salaries and wages

and costs of materials and trade union regulations. I want to deal only with the responsibility of the script. For the benefit of exhibitors (and some producers) the script is the thing described in the credit titles of the screenplay. It dictates more than anything else the ultimate nature and quality of the film. It is indispensable to the director, the casting director, the art director, sound director, cameraman, actors, and everybody connected with drawing up the many schedules which control the making of the film. A film could no more be made without it than Wren could have built St. Paul's without a plan.

But would Wren have set his builders to work with a plan half drawn? Would he have had a plan which constantly changed as the edifice was rising? Yet that is what is repeatedly being done in our film studios. This results not only in loss of quality but in delays and re-shooting and considerable increase in cost. Producers half always know this; will they now, when economy is so urgent, at last put their knowledge into practice?

The trouble is that many producers, while paying lip-service to the overwhelming importance of the script (as any common-sense man must) continue to regard it as something that can be run off overnight if there should happen to be a hurry. They must begin to appreciate that there is nothing in any film to which more time and care should be devoted. Now that they are rightly searching for every means of cutting down costs, let it not be on the script. Let them realise that every extra £1,000 spent on the script can save £20,000 in the studio.

I am not suggesting that more writers should be employed per script. Too many producers already imagine that a script is bound to be ten times as good when written by ten writers.

By T. E. B. CLARKE

THIS being the season for unselfish thought, let us screenwriters wish all the best for 1948 to the directors who will put our work on the screen. May we earn them high praise from the film critic of *The Times* for the

originality of their stories and the excellence of their dialogue. May we never provide them with scripts poor enough to get us mentioned by name. And may the day never come when the director will find himself treated like a mere writer. As, for instance:—

SCENE 1. THE CONFERENCE.

"Yes, Hugo is a competent director, but I don't think he knows much about women."

"Then why not have Ronnie Guddle direct the love scenes? He turned in a grand job on 'Be Careful, Darling'."

"O.K.—if the budget'll run to it. But don't forget we've signed up Willoughby Cheeseman to direct that sequence with the goat, and we've already got Eric Pikestaff doing additional shots in the haunted house scene. . . ."

"Which reminds me—my wife has a very good idea for that matt shot. . ."

SCENE 2. NIGHT LOCATION.

"Hullo, Hugo."

"Hullo, Eric. What's happening here?"

"Just getting a few night shots for 'Crack o' the Whip'."

"My dear fellow! I've been directing 'Crack o' the Whip' all day at the studios"

"You have? Well, I'll be . . . they've done it on us again! Can't you hear the blighters? 'Let 'em both have a go, and we'll use what we like best in each version.'"

SCENE 3. AFTER THE ROUGH-CUT.

"The direction of that mortuary sequence lacks something. It's dead."

"I agree. We'd better settle for a retake."

"What it wants is a fresh mind on it."

"How about Zachary Cornbloom? Chap who did that revue last night at the Tiara."

"That's an idea! Of course, he's never done any film direction, but he certainly knows his stuff on the stage."

"And after that press, his name's bound to be a draw at the box-office."

Note: Any similarity to persons living or under contract is purely coincidental.

By *WOLFGANG WILHELM*

THE trend of screenwriters and other creative film artists to assume directorial functions has become a stampede: its cause—dissatisfaction with the almost totalitarian powers of our directors: its effect—as far as writer-directors are concerned, initial success.

Although dissociating myself from the desire of screenwriters to direct, I believe their desire is more justified, particularly in the case of an original story, than that of any other film-worker. Under present conditions the screenwriter's contribution to the final product ceases weeks before the first shot is taken. The interpretation of his story and script is taken out of his hands from the moment his efforts begin to be registered on celluloid.

The British screenwriter is at a disadvantage with his continental colleague. The French, German, Austrian and Czech screenwriter is, and always was, an equal member of a triumvirate of writer, director, and producer, the latter devoting his efforts to the smooth functioning and co-ordination of all technical effects after delegating to the former two all artistic considerations for better or for worse. Even if it should turn out to have been "for worse," the final product will still bear the stamp of individuality, whatever its other shortcomings.

The Continental screenwriter is the first major artist to be approached either by the producer, director, or star; he works in close contact with the director during the preparation of script and production schedule, is at his right side through the floor work, spends long hours with him in the cutting-room. No wonder that he is satisfied with his position in the industry.

Frankly, the British screenwriter is not. At the same time he realises that screenwriting should be a full-time job, and that to combine it with directing or producing is often more than one man can tackle. But the frustration due to his unbalanced position in the production unit forces him to be a competitor in the race for directorial honours. The result is

often a dual watering-down of individual talent which the British film industry at the present time can ill afford.

By *KAY STRUEBY*

IF you are lucky and have missed being told a writer's value on the set is strictly Nuisance, you will have seen at first hand the remarkable improvements in production methods that have helped to put British films on the map.

We have come a long way since the "bad old days" of the 30's when our product was often dreadful and making it was a pretty precarious business. Working conditions were far from ideal—scripts on speculation, unpaid overtime, wholesale shut-downs, and other evils that no one regrets having lost. What is to be regretted is the loss of one of the few assets of those "bad old days"—the zest for picture-making that was shared by everyone from director to clapper-boy. Everyone liked his job and was convinced that it was important to the picture, which in turn was of enormous importance. Picture-making was an adventure, a challenge, and a heck of a lot of fun.

Today, with fewer production companies operating, it is mainly a headache, or rather, a collection of headaches. The producer is more than ever concerned about budgets, for he has the added problems of rising costs, fuel crises, and the like; the same applies to the director with his schedules; the writer about the narrowed market for his work, the floor crew about rules and regulations. There are grumbles and complaints, an occasional outburst of temperament, an occasional strike. Much time is lost in passing the buck to the other fellow; much effort is wasted in attempting to observe rigid rules in an industry that must be flexible.

The recent tax on American films has left a gap that only British production can fill. In our own interests, more pictures must be made at lower cost. This will be done—but let's do it cheerfully. Let's get back the keenness we had in the "bad old days."

Let's put back the fun into film-making!

By *GUY MORGAN*

THE Movie finger writes, and having writ, moves on—usually to another assignment.

What is that crying? A fatherless brainchild on cold front-office steps.

Producer, production manager, director, art director, casting director, costume designer, crowd around and poke with curious fingers. It cries—it *must* be sickly! Trusted foster-parents are summoned to suckle it. Soon it will go to the studio to be brought up by strangers, to emerge, marching in line, another hard and bright little automaton, by Alibi out of Cliche.

Yet it was once an idea conceived in love by a writer. He carried his burden sleeping and waking, muttered to it on buses, nursed it in bed. Through those long gravid months when he attended the studio clinic for progressive weekly treatments, through the protracted labour of hermaphroditic birth, he was sustained by the belief that it would be different, individual, his.

He planned every detail of its future, visualised scenes and constructed a complicated system of characters and human relationships to give it proper expression, knew many things about it intuitively, learned its weaknesses and its strength, its potentialities and its limitations.

He had, of course, been careful to obtain an affiliation order against a producer. But producers are fickle, easily ashamed of first ecstasies, always prone to mistrust the object of their early affections. Though they have paid for the experience and post-natal care of a parent, they rarely make use of it, preferring the advice of spectators, and the services of baby-farmers.

The playwright enjoys the full status and authority of parenthood. To a more limited degree so does the novelist. But the screenwriter is cast early adrift in the production snow—with the wages of his sin, but without his precious bundle.

It's a fortunate film that knows its own father.

A LISTING OF SCREEN WRITERS' CREDITS
EARNED ON FEATURE PRODUCTIONS
OF CURRENT AND RECENT RELEASE

CREDITS

FEBRUARY 1, 1948 TO MARCH 1, 1948

A

FRANKLYN ADREON
Joint Original Screenplay (with Sol Shor)
THE THRILL MAN, Rep.
EDNA ANHALT
Sole Screenplay SUNBURST, WB

B

BEN BARZMAN
Joint Screenplay (with Alfred Lewis Levitt)
THE BOY WITH GREEN HAIR, RKO
VICKI BAUM
Novel Basis THE LONG DENIAL, RKO
D. D. BEAUCHAMP
Sole Original Screenplay THE WONDERFUL
RACE AT RIMROCK, U-I.
ALBERT BEICH
Sole Original Screenplay THE BRIDE GOES
WILD, MGM
CHARLES BENNETT
Sole Screenplay THE SIGN OF THE RAM
(Signet Productions) Col.

LEONARDO BERCOVICI
Adaptation PORTRAIT OF JENNIE, Van-
guard Films
EDWARD BERND
Sole Original Screenplay BLONDIE'S NIGHT
OUT, Col.
Sole Original Screenplay RADIO ROMEO,
(S) Col.
Sole Original Screenplay WHO DONE IT,
(S) Col.
Sole Original Screenplay BILLIE GETS HER
MAN (S) Col.
PETER BERNEIS
Joint Screenplay (with Paul Osborn) POR-
TRAIT OF JENNIE, Vanguard Films

CLAUDE BINYON
Sole Screenplay THE SAXON CHARM, U.I.
MICHAEL BLANKFORT
Joint Screenplay (with Robert Thoren)
THE JUDGE'S WIFE, U.I.
MURIEL ROY BOLTON
Joint Screenplay (with Ian Hunter) THE
SPIRITUALIST, Eagle-Lion

GEORGE BRANDT
Sole Original Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPA-
TIONS L 7-2 (Jerry Fairbanks) Par. (S)
Sole Original Screenplay POPULAR SCIENCE
J 7-2 (Jerry Fairbanks) Par. (S)
Sole Original Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPA-
TIONS L 7-3 (Jerry Fairbanks) Par. (S)
Sole Original Screenplay POPULAR SCIENCE
J 7-4 (Jerry Fairbanks) Par. (S)
Sole Original Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPA-
TIONS L-J-4 (Jerry Fairbanks) Par. (S)

RICHARD BRANSTEN
Joint Story (with Ruth McKenney) ABI-
GAIL, DEAR HEART, Par.

LOU BRESLOW
Joint Screenplay (with Laurence Stallings)
A MIRACLE CAN HAPPEN, Ben Bogeaus
Prod.

JAMESON BREWER
Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with Jack
Rubin) KILROY ON DECK, Mono.

JOHN BRIGHT
Joint Screenplay (with Max Wilk) CLOSE-
UP, Marathon Productions

C

LEWIS CLAY
Joint Original Screenplay (with Arthur Hoerl,
Royal K. Cole and Joseph Poland) SUPER-
MAN, Col.
ROYAL K. COLE
Joint Original Screenplay (with Arthur Hoerl,
Lewis Clay and Joseph Poland) SUPERMAN,
Col.
HAL COLLINS
Additional Dialogue I SURRENDER (Kay
Pic.) Col.

D

W. SCOTT DARLING
Joint Screenplay (with Sam Newman)
CHARLIE CHAN IN MURDER BY ALPHA-
BET, Mono.
RONALD DAVIDSON
Sole Story DAREDEVILS OF THE SKY, Rep.
EDWARD DEIN
Joint Story (with Ted Thomas) THE GAL-
LANT BLADE, Col.

E

HENRY EPHRON
Joint Screenplay (with Phoebe Ephron)
JOHN LOVES MARY, WB
PHOEBE EPHRON
Joint Screenplay (with Henry Ephron) JOHN
LOVES MARY, WB
JULIUS EVANS
Sole Original Screenplay THE SWORD OF
THE AVENGER (United Philippine Artists)
Eagle-Lion

F

BERNARD FEINS
Joint Story Basis (with Daniel Taradash and
Julian Blaustein) THE NOOSE HANGS HIGH,
Eagle Lion
LUCILLE FLETCHER
Sole Screenplay and Radio Play Basis SORRY,
WRONG NUMBER, (Hal Wallis Prod.) Par.
RICHARD FLOURNOY
Joint Screenplay (with William Sackheim)
ONE LAST FLING, WB
IRWIN R. FRANKLYN
Sole Original Screenplay THE WOMAN
FROM TANGIER, Col.
DANIEL FUCHS
Sole Screenplay HOLLOW TRIUMPH, Eagle-
Lion

G

JOHN GRANT
Joint Original Screenplay (with Robert Lees
and Frederic I. Rinaldo) BRAIN OF FRANK-
ENSTEIN, U. I.
Joint Screenplay (with Howard Harris) THE
NOOSE HANGS HIGH, Eagle-Lion
MORTON GRANT
Joint Screenplay (with Walter Ferris) THE
GALLANT BLADE, Col.
CHARLES GRAYSON
Joint Screenplay Basis (with Arthur T.
Horman) THE NOOSE HANGS HIGH, Eagle-
Lion

H

NORMAN S. HALL
Sole Screenplay DAREDEVILS OF THE SKY,
Rep.
HOWARD HARRIS
Joint Screenplay (with John Grant) THE
NOOSE HANGS HIGH, Eagle-Lion
HY HEATH
Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with Harry
Fraser) WILD HORSE RANGE, Kanab Pic.
HENRY EDWARD HELSETH
Novel Basis THE LAW AND MARTIN ROME,
Fox
F. HUGH HERBERT
Sole Screenplay SCUDDA-HOO! SCUDDA-
HAY!, Fox
ARTHUR HOERL
Joint Original Screenplay (with Royal K.
Cole, Lewis Clay and Joseph Poland) SUPER-
MAN, Col.
ARTHUR HORMAN
Joint Screenplay Basis (with Charles Grayson)
THE NOOSE HANGS HIGH, Eagle-Lion
IAN HUNTER
Joint Screenplay (with Muriel Roy Bolton)
THE SPIRITUALIST, Eagle-Lion

K

KARL KAMB
Sole Screenplay THE PITFALL, Regal Films

L

DAVID LANG
Sole Original Screenplay CAGED FURY, (Pine
Thomas), Par.
CHARLES LARSON
Sole Original Screenplay THE BLUE LADY,
Rep.
ROBERT LEES
Joint Original Screenplay (with Frederic I.
Rinaldo and John Grant) BRAIN OF FRANK-
ENSTEIN, U.I.
ALFRED LEWIS LEVITT
Joint Screenplay (with Ben Barzman) THE
BOY WITH GREEN HAIR, RKO
HERBERT CLYDE LEWIS
Sole Story ONE LAST FLING, WB

M

RUTH McKENNEY
Joint Story (with Richard Bransten) ABI-
GAIL, DEAR HEART, Par.
RICHARD MAIBAUM
Sole Screenplay ABIGAIL DEAR HEART, Par.
HERMAN MANKIEWICZ
Sole Screenplay THE LONG DENIAL, RKO
AL MARTIN
Character Basis RUSTY LEADS THE WAY, Col
RICHARD MURPHY
Sole Screenplay THE LAW AND MARTIN
ROME, Fox

N

SAM NEWMAN
Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with W.
Scott Darling) CHARLIE CHAN IN MURDER
BY ALPHABET, Mono.
SLOAN NIBLEY
Sole Original Screenplay EYES OF TEXAS, Rep

O

PAUL OSBORN
Joint Screenplay (with Peter Berneis) POR-
TRAIT OF JENNIE, Vanguard Films

In this listing of screen credits, published monthly in THE SCREEN WRITER, the following abbreviations are used:
COL—Columbia Pictures Corporation; E-L—Eagle-Lion Studios; FOX—20th Century-Fox Film Corporation; GOLDWYN
—Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.; MGM—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios; MONO—Monogram Pictures Corporation;
PAR—Paramount Pictures, Inc.; PRC—Producers Releasing Corporation of America; REP—Republic Productions, Inc.;
RKO—RKO Radio Studios, Inc.; ROACH—Hal E. Roach Studio, Inc.; UA—United Artists Corporation; UNI-INT'L—
Universal-International Pictures; UWP—United World Pictures; WB—Warner Brothers Studios. (S) designates screen short.

P

WILFRID H. PETTITT
Additional Dialogue **THE GALLANT BLADE**, Col.
JOSEPH POLAND
Joint Original Screenplay (with Arthur Hoerl, Lewis Clay and Royal Cole) **SUPERMAN**, Col.
Sole Original Screenplay **STAGE TO MESA CITY**, PRC

R

MARTIN RACKIN
Adaptation **CLOSE-UP**, Marathon Prod.
MILTON RAISON
Sole Original Screenplay **SPEED TO SPARE** (Pine Thomas) Par.
FREDERIC I. RINALDO
Joint Original Screenplay (with Robert Lees and John Grant) **BRAIN OF FRANKENSTEIN**, U.I.
ROBERT RICHARDS
Sole Screenplay **ONE SUNDAY AFTERNOON**, WB
ARTHUR ROSS
Sole Screenplay **RUSTY LEADS THE WAY**, Col.
JACK RUBIN
Joint Screenplay (with Jameson Brewer) **KILROY ON DECK**, Mono.
TIM RYAN
Additional Dialogue **CHARLIE CHAN IN MURDER BY ALPHABET**, Mono.

S

WILLIAM SACKHEIM
Sole Screenplay **DAMES DON'T TALK**, WB
Joint Screenplay (with Richard Flournoy) **ONE LAST FLING**, WB
SOL SHOR
Joint Original Screenplay (with Franklyn Adreon) **THE THRILL MAN**, Rep.
LAURENCE STALLINGS
Joint Screenplay (with Lou Breslow) **A MIRACLE CAN HAPPEN**, Ben Bogaeus Prod.

T

DANIEL TARADASH
Joint Story Basis (with Julian Blaustein and Bernard Feins) **THE NOOSE HANGS HIGH**, Eagle-Lion
ROBERT THOEREN
Joint Screenplay (with Michael Blankfort) **THE JUDGE'S WIFE**, U.I.
TED THOMAS
Joint Story (with Edward Dein) **THE GALLANT BLADE**, Col.

W

M. COATES WEBSTER
Sole Screenplay **I SURRENDER DEAR**, (Kay Pictures) Col.
CRANE WILBUR
Sole Story **THE SPIRITUALIST**, Eagle-Lion
MAX WILK
Joint Screenplay (with John Bright) **CLOSE-UP**, Marathon Productions

Y

NEDRICK YOUNG
Sole Story **RUSTY LEADS THE WAY**, Col.

The Manuscript Market

NOVEMBER 1, 1947 TO MARCH 1, 1948

LISTING THE AUTHORS, TITLES AND CHARACTER OF LITERARY MATERIAL RECENTLY ACQUIRED BY THE MOTION PICTURE STUDIOS

COLUMBIA PICTURES

RICHARD ENGLISH, No Place To Go, Published Story
JOSEPH KESSEL, Coup De Grace, Published Novel
ALAN LEMAY, Spanish Crossing, Unpublished Story
O'HENRY, The Passing of Black Eagle, Published Story
ROBERT B. RAISBECK, Deadline Mystery, Radio Script
MARY SULLIVAN, My Double Life, Published Story
FRANK WILSON, Undercover Man—He Trapped Capone, Published Article

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS

HERMINIE KAVANAGH, Darby O'Gill And Ashes Of Old Wishes, Published Stories

EAGLE-LION STUDIOS

ALBERT COHEN (with Jack Harvey), Let's Live A Little, Original Screenplay
JACK HARVEY (with Albert Cohen), Let's Live A Little, Original Screenplay
NORMAN E. NYGAARD, Twelve Against The Underworld, Published Novel

SAMUEL GOLDWYN STUDIOS

ALBERTA HANNUM, Roseanna McCoy, Published Novel

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

NEAL BAKER, JR., Hit And Run, Unpublished Story
ESTHER FORBES, Running Of The Tide, Unpublished Novel
ROSS LOCKRIDGE, JR., Raintree County, Published Novel
WILLIAM ROBERTS, The Saintly Miss Peters, Unpublished Story
COLLIER YOUNG, Act Of Violence, Unpublished Story

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

EDMUND BELOIN, Diamond In A Haystack, Original Screenplay
THEODORE DREISER, Sister Carrie, Published Novel
AUGUSTUS GOETZ (with Ruth Goetz), The Heiress, Play
RUTH GOETZ, (with Augustus Goetz) The Heiress, Play
SOMERSET MAUGHAM, Land Of Promise, Play
JACK ROBERTS, Big Sister Blues, Unpublished Story
THOMAS WOLFE, Look Homeward, Angel, Published Novel

RKO RADIO

VICKI BAUM (with Lily Latte), Sands O' Life, Unpublished Story
CLARENCE GREENE (with Russell Rouse), Public Defender, Unpublished Story
DOROTHY LANGLEY, Dark Medallion, Published Novel
LILY LATTE (with Vicki Baum), Sands O' Life, Unpublished Story
ANTHONY MANN (with Francis Rosenwald), Follow Me Quietly, Original Screenplay
FRANCIS ROSENWALD (with Anthony Mann), Follow Me Quietly, Original Screenplay
RUSSELL ROUSE (with Clarence Green), Public Defender, Unpublished Story

UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL

BEN BENGAL (with Dan Moore and Herbert Kline), Illegal Entry, Original Screenplay
D. D. BEAUCHAMP, The Wonderful Race At Rimrock, Published Story
WILLIAM BOWERS, The Western Story, Unpublished Story
ROBERT BUCKNER, Rogues' Regiment, Unpublished Story
GERALD BUTLER, Kiss The Blood Off My Hands, Published Novel
ROBERT CARSON, You Got To Stay Happy, Published Novel
SELMA DIAMOND (with Onnie Whizin) Three For The Money, Unpublished Story
HARRY GONDELL, The Greatest Diplomat, Unpublished Story
HENRY EDWARD HELSETH, The Last Count, Unpublished Novelette
HERBERT KLINE (with Dan Moore and Ben Bengal), Illegal Entry, Original Screenplay
DAN MOORE (with Herbert Kline and Ben Bengal), Illegal Entry, Original Screenplay
HOWARD SNYDER (with Hugh Wedlock), Easy Does It., Unpublished Story
HUGH WEDLOCK (with Howard Snyder), Easy Does It., Unpublished Story
ONNIE WHIZIN (with Selma Diamond), Three For The Money, Unpublished Story

WARNER BROTHERS

VERA CASPARY (with Isadore Goldsmith), Marriage '48, Unpublished Story
EVERETT FREEMAN, Cleopatra Arms, Unpublished Story
LESTER FULLER, Miss Richmond Takes Grant, Unpublished Story
ISADORE GOLDSMITH (with Vera Caspary), Marriage '48, Unpublished Story
JERRY GRUSKIN, The Octopus And Miss Heath, Unpublished Story
LARRY MARCUS, Until The Day I Die, Unpublished Story
REDMOND PRIOR, These Many Years, Unpublished Story
CHARLES SPEER, Teacher, Unpublished Story

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Next Month and Thereafter

FOR our next Unemployment section, we've scheduled *The Road to Self Improvement*, by EMMET LAVERY, as a subject of interest to all writers today, employed or not. • Another pertinent article, *Tax Relief For The Writer*, is being prepared for us by tax consultant BEN BISGEIER. • You may not agree with RAYMOND CHANDLER'S *Qualified Farewell!*, but his reasons for that farewell are eloquent and far-reaching. • In addition, STEPHEN LONGSTREET assembles *The Composite Screen Writer*; and COLLIER YOUNG comes out *In Defense Of Story-Experts*. • DWIGHT TAYLOR tells us how they are, industry-wise, in *You Know How They Are*; and EVERETT FREEMAN'S *Hollywood And The New Yorker* will be a highlight of the next issue. • The British tax situation is explored for us by ALLEN RIVKIN, and we'll have

Future Articles by

KEN McCORMICK

SAMSON RAPHAELSON

BERT GRANET

MILT GROSS

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ARCHE WINSTEN

KEN ENGLUND

BERTRAM MILHAUSER

WILLIAM HEBERT

THORNTON DELEHANTY

MAX WILKINSON

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The Road To Self-Employment

By

EMMET LAVERY

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EDMUND HARTMANN: *The New Mythology*

DWIGHT TAYLOR: *You Know How They Are, A Story*

MORRIS and GEORGE PRIMOFF: *Is It Deductible?*

PAUL GANGELIN: *The Goldwyn Fallacy*

MORRIS COHEN: *Can You Sell A Title?*

JUN 1 1948

SWG REPORTS

ON THE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
ON ACCIDENT AND SICKNESS INSURANCE
ON WRITER-PRODUCER CREDITS



Letter from Denmark

By JUDITH PODSELVER

FOR such a small country — 4 million inhabitants, half of New York City — Denmark already has a glorious past in motion picture making. Danish directors like August Blom, A. W. Sandberg, Benjamin Christensen were the ones who introduced the first long-reelers and turned out those heart-breaking historical melodramas and stories taken from Dickens' books, in which Waldemar Psilander and Olaf Fonss starred. Those of us who were children after the first World War still remember the Danish comics Pat and Patichon. As for the "Duse of Motion Pictures," "the unrivaled" Asta Nielsen who provoked the first movie critics to write more enthusiastic praises than any later screen actress, has just published two books of memoirs called *De Tiende Muse* (a pun meaning either the tenth or the silent Muse). There she evokes the days of her debut in the movies around 1910 and the series of films in which she performed later under such directors at Pabst, Lubitsch, Wegener, Lang, Murnau,—amongst other pictures, that *Joyless Street* which saw the youthful Greta Garbo emerge. Now somewhat deaf, but still stately, Asta Nielsen lives by herself in Copenhagen and will probably end her days in comparative well-being since in her quality of veteran of the movies, she is on the way to obtain from the government what amounts to a pension; that is: an exhibitor's license.

No one in Denmark can open a motion picture theatre without an authorization from the government. In that way does the government control the imports of foreign pictures. There are so few picture houses (less than 300 for the whole country) that each one makes a sizeable profit, even after 60% of the box-office receipts

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The Screen Writer

Vol. 3, No. 12

MAY, 1948

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

JOHN LARKIN, *Acting Editor*

The resignation of Richard English as Editor of The Screen Writer was accepted with regret by the SWG Executive Board on May 17th in a resolution commending his services and the high quality of the four issues that he sent to press. Mr. English resigned because he did not believe that he could carry out the new policy which requires voluntary services in every department of the magazine. This policy was voted by the Executive Board and approved by the membership on May 10th. A new Editorial Committee is being organized for this purpose.

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The Road to Self-Employment

By

EMMET LAVERY

ORIGINALLY this started out to be one more article about the licensing of material for the screen. But we'll get around to that soon enough. You can hardly talk about self-employment without talking about licensing. So let's begin where I left off about a year ago, or to be more exact, in the June 1947 issue of *The Screen Writer*.

Those were the days when the idea of the American Authors Authority was very much alive and I was speaking up as follows:

And so we in the Screen Writers' Guild say: let's stop talking about licensing. Let's begin to license. Let's set a stop-date. Let's have a thorough study and a prompt vote on AAA. We still think AAA is the best form of licensing we have seen so far but we're willing to be shown if somebody has found a better way; let's have the alternatives, if any, and let's have them soon . . . very soon. . . . The way we look at it, that was a pretty good snowball we threw out in the early spring. And there's still a lot of snow clinging to it, even in the heat of June. There will still be a lot of snow on it, when the frost is on the ground in the fall.

But let's not fool around too long with this thing called licensing. The best snowball in the world won't last forever. So—

If it isn't *this snowball*, what snowball is it?

Well, a lot of snow has come and gone since then. And AAA lies quietly in its grave. No formal obsequies have been held, apart from one formal report of a sub-committee of the Authors League. Nor have many tears been shed by those of us

who sincerely believed in the program envisioned in the proposed Authors Authority. Whatever the merits of AAA, it had become immediately apparent that most members of the other guilds of the Authors League would never approve a plan that involved even a temporary assignment of copyright to a central writers authority, no matter how closely identified this authority might be with the basic machinery of the Authors League. So the whole concept of the Authors Authority, by common consent, has been put aside and put aside without any rancor or any ill feeling between the guilds concerned.

Out of all the tumult and the shouting, oddly enough, has come a stronger feeling of unity and common identity among the various guilds of the League than there has been in many years. For while a few of us have disagreed from time to time on the matter of methodology, we found implicit unity on the matter of principle. Especially, on the principle of licensing.

TRUE, we haven't the answers to all of the questions that we asked a year ago, but some progress has been made. If we don't know which snowball we would like to throw, we at least know the snowball we *do not want* to throw. And we have a hunch that the snowball we are looking for is something mighty like a minimum basic agreement for the marketing of original material for the screen, something similar to the contract which the Dramatists' Guild has in the theatre. But whether a contract such as this would have to be negotiated by each of the four guilds of the League with motion picture producers,

or by the Screen Writers' Guild alone, or by the League acting as a joint agency for all the guilds, are matters that no one has yet resolved.

UNDER normal conditions, a good idea like licensing might be kicked around in committees in the various guilds for a few more years without achieving anything except a few pleasant commitments "in principle." But time has a way, occasionally, of working for writers instead of against them and this, your correspondent is happy to report, is one of those pleasurable intervals.

Three developments, among others, would seem to hasten some definitive action on licensing. One is the rapid emergence of television, with its assorted problems for producers as well as for writers. The second is the gradually changing character of motion picture writing, which in many instances is beginning to take on the form and the substance of self-employment. The third is the employment contract of the Screen Writers' Guild with the motion picture studio which comes up for renegotiation in 1949.

Should the Guild in 1949 seek a contract or a clause to cover the marketing of original material, an item not now included in a contract which covers a distinctly employment situation? Or should the Guild join with other guilds of the League in working out some over-all negotiation in 1949 for licensing of original material?

Yet each of these questions in turn is really subsidiary to the question of the basic nature of screen writing and, in turn, to the basic nature of screen writing for television. All of

these points are inter-related and we must resolve them soon. The infant prodigy known as television will not permit us to postpone anything.

Will television follow the early path of radio? Will it pay as little as possible for material and as little as possible for writers? Will it be a mere catch-as-catch-can proposition for free lance writers or will the field be stabilized from the outset with a fair licensing program? Will the basic jurisdiction over writers be in a new television writers guild or in the individual guilds as their members may happen to work in television? And what will be the basic concept of contract writers in television? Will they, like screen writers in the past, be regarded merely as one more group of employees who draw a weekly pay check? Or will they, like screen writers in the future perhaps, hold that the method of remuneration has little bearing on determining the creative or non-creative nature of the work being done?

THERE is no easy answer to any of these problems, but fortunately the Authors League is already working on various points designed to clarify the principle of licensing in television, to which it has been committed for some time. Already, according to reports from New York, the

Dramatists' Guild is conferring with Broadway managers for a revision of contracts, so that television rights can be excluded from all deals for motion picture rights. The League itself is continuing its drive for "separation of rights," so that omnibus contracts no longer will dispose of all rights in one deal. Committees are also at work in the Radio Writers' Guild and the Screen Writers' Guild studying various problems of the contract writer and the free lance writer in television.

OUT of all this activity one fact is clearly evident; if the problem of licensing is won for television, it is also won for the screen. For at certain points the two mediums use the same kind of product and the same kind of writers and the joint action necessary to stabilize the principle in one field is exactly the same kind of action that would be needed in the other field.

No, it is not our virtues but our necessities which will solve the problems of licensing. That and the way we choose to look at the craft of screen writing. If we think of it, as do our brothers in the Dramatists' Guild and the Authors' Guild, and the licensing craftsmen of the Radio Writers' Guild, we can not be content with anything less than licensing

for ourselves. If we think of it as Samuel Goldwyn thought of it in the last issue of *The Screen Writer*, the way is clear and not too hard.

True, Mr. Goldwyn over-simplifies the matter a bit. There is a presumption in favor of the original authors' originality in the play and in the novel, which does not exist quite yet in the making of motion pictures. It is quite possible that for some time studios would be just as quick to rewrite a good original screen play as they would a first-class novel—and yet the times are changing and the craft of screen writing with them.

Remember the days when our predecessors were told that a rock was a rock and a tree was a tree and they could all be shot in Griffith Park? It's nothing to laugh about. Screen writing begins with a camera and today, when so many screen writers are without their customary contract employment at the studios, you too can rediscover how to write with a camera.

An Eyemo is an Eyemo and, if you are very lucky, you may be able to make your own picture—or a reel at least—in the nearest public park. And would *you* sell it for a lump sum, with television just around the corner?

Not you—you're on the road to self-employment.



Screen Writers' Guild Studio Chairmen

(May 19, 1948)

Columbia — Maurice Tombragel.

MGM — Anne Chapin; Studio Committee: Sonya Levien, Joseph Ansen, Robert Nathan, George Wells.

Paramount — Richard Breen.

Republic — Sloan Nibley; alternate, Patrick Ford.

RKO — Daniel Mainwaring; alternate, Martin Rackin.

Fox — Richard Murphy; alternate, Wanda Tuchock.

Universal-International — D. D. Beauchamp.

Warner Brothers — Ed North.

Plots and Characters

By

JAY RICHARD KENNEDY

THE 20th century gave rise to one new constructive art and one new constructive science. I am referring neither to the art of misleading propaganda, nor the extension of science in the field of nuclear-physics. As yet, neither has proven itself to be constructive and both began their dubious careers before our century. The art I refer to has the singular quality of reaching—without malicious intent in the main—the largest number of people. The science, that of concerning itself affirmatively with the whole human being rather than with specialized aspects of him, as has been science's habit heretofore. This new science attempts to synthesize other related special disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, neurology, general medicine and history—it is called psychodynamics. The new art attempts to synthesize the novel, the play, sculpture, still photography, architecture, choreography and music. Motion pictures is the name of this art, though Hollywood has re-named it Industry and outsiders have called it uncomplimentary names too numerous to mention.

I draw a parallel between the two, not as some may suspect, because both this art and this science are the most lucrative in their separate domains, but because both potentially can serve the maximum function of revealing man to himself, under our the most trying conditions of man's trying history. Also, it is a singular coincidence that the controversy among practitioners in each is identical. Psychodynamics, with the language of science, states the controversy as one between the school of

thought which contends that the inner dynamics with which a human being is born are primary and environment incidental, and another which argues that the impact upon those inherent dynamics of the individual by environment, causing vital change in the person or his social group, is primary and entirely shapes and even reshapes the individual.

The language of art states this same controversy in terms of plot, versus primacy of characterization. Hollywood, in the main, by its product, has demonstrated a conviction that plot—deeds and action—are primary, while foreign films generally have tended to assert that characterization, not plot, is the primary concern of a film. Extremism is sometimes a characteristic of youth, and youth is the outstanding quality of motion pictures as an art form.

THE true relationship between plot and characterization is not one of conflicting elements, but rather of umbilically connected ones with inexorable interdependence. The proof of this can be arrived at, I believe, by understanding the varying traditions which lead to these opposite extremist outlooks and a true understanding of the ways in which the film art differs from the other art forms. This latter might disclose that the film art is more limited than other art forms, it likewise can reach new and unexplored heights. As there is a great deal of art to science, and as much of science to art, let us examine the creative problem of film making under discussion today in this scientific spirit.

CONSIDER the question of tradition first. The United States was the first country to enter motion picture making as a serious enterprise. It is a paradox that this serious undertaking brought forth what to-day seem trivial results: slapstick farce, wild Westerns, one and two reelers, the action thriller serial. Nevertheless, through these primitive products, film pioneers were discovering that the essential characteristic of motion picture, the one shared by no other art form, was its endless capacity for motion. To this must be added the cultural reality that America itself is young and is still a nation given to spontaneity of action, to the tendency of judging people by their deeds, rather than by the *motivation* for these deeds. The foreign film, came out of a different culture. In addition, it came later and was based on the tradition of the theatre, a tradition in which inner character conflicts, not deeds, are the source of drama. This would explain why Hollywood and foreign film makers approach the *values* of plot and characterization from opposite directions. But it does not explain why, when either is in error, both run afoul of the same set of problems. This can be explained not by tradition, but by the very nature of the motion picture art form itself, but the fact that the film, as I said before, synthesizes other art forms, and in doing so, finds that it has different limitations and different possibilities.

TAKE the novel. Examine Goethe, Tolstoy, Balzac, Zola, Dostoevski, Mark Twain. In all of them, there is a common denominator re-

garding plot and character—namely, that detailed plot development was never of primary importance. Most vital was the disclosure of the inner experiences of the individual. That technique is still employed by the important novelists of today—Hemingway, Maugham, Steinbeck, etc. This process in the quality novel can best be described by saying that environment and outer forces are reflected primarily by revealing their effect on the *inner* workings of the individual. It is the individual's "inner plot" which serves as the spine for the novelist's disclosure of that character. The only obligation to environment is that on those infrequent occasions when it become dominant, it can be treated authentically and at the point at which it affects the individual whose story is told, it be incisive and vivid. Emphasis of the pulp writer, the cheap mystery story writer, the action story boys, in the field of novel writing.

Take the play. From Euripides to Bernard Shaw, the physical limitations of the boards made on-stage plot action the least of the dramatic ingredients. The action happens off-stage and we, the audience, share

the emotional experience of the characters of the play which result from this off-stage action. We believe the off-stage action to the degree that the actors, director and playwright make their responses to it believable.

RETURNING to the novel for a moment—the words on paper mean nothing until they are transformed from the *sybols* of things to the *things themselves* in the mind and emotions of the reader. In the play, the off-stage action, while having more reality than symbols, nevertheless, does not become true reality until its effect upon the actors is believably communicated to us by them across the footlights. In a painting, or in a work of sculpture, action or motion is likewise implied, rather than real. "You almost see the volcano erupting. You almost hear the thunder of the guns." The same, with aesthetic variations, is true of still photography. In the case of music, the note symbols by which the composer communicates his emotional experiences, are not reality until they are re-converted from these symbols by the emotional frame of reference

of the listener, rather than that of the composer or even the performing musicians.

The film, in this respect, is unlike any other art form, though it uses all of them. It has no symbols. It communicates directly. The action is not a half-reality off-stage. It is complete reality on-stage and the audience is irritated when it is not. The motion is not implied. It is actual. Communication to our nervous system is not indirect, as in the case of music. It is most direct. It is not possible to arrive at a correct balance between plot and characterization without understanding the bearing that this difference in the motion picture art form has upon the balance.

The simplest statement of it is that a medium as direct in its nature as film—as dependent on motion as film—as nourished by action as film—does its best job of disclosing character by doing so through deeds. *This means that plot is the method by which the film medium achieves characterization.* Spare me the argument of the so-called 'tough realists' who, at this point may say, "Hold on! Cut

(Continued on Page 21)

In Memoriam

DAVID HERTZ

Executive Board

1946 - 1947

1939 - 1940

The New Mythology

By

EDMUND HARTMAN

A middle western theatre chain recently asked 12,000 of its customers, "Why do you go to the movies?" There were 9,000 replies, an unusually high average on a questionnaire. 60 per cent said, "To see my favorite stars." 26 per cent heard that the picture was worth seeing. 9 per cent liked the type of story advertised. 3 per cent always went to a certain theatre rain or shine. 2 per cent could be titillated by the picture title.

Edmund Hartmann, long a writer in the industry, has a few pertinent remarks to make on the psychology behind this state of affairs.

APOLLO meets Aphrodite . . . Apollo loses Aphrodite . . . Clinch . . . Kiss . . . Fade . . . The writers may give the characters any names they choose . . . They may make the hero a miner in Pennsylvania or a farmer in Kansas or a millionaire on Park Avenue . . . It doesn't matter very much, for what the public sees is a god of the Cinema making love to a goddess of the Cinema; two film deities enacting a Saga of their heroic adventures. Name them Dexter Penrose and Diana Blythe, two orphans who meet in the night somewhere on Skid Row. What your audience is thinking about as the tale unfolds is how gorgeous Gene Tierney looks in rags; what a real handsome fellow Tyrone Power is, slumped over the piano with the three days beard and the glass of gin.

For just as the Norse story-tellers peopled Valhalla with Wodin, Loki, Thor, Frey and the other gods; just as the Greek and Roman poets filled Mount Olympus with Zeus, Apollo, Aphrodite, Venus, Mercury and the rest, so the movie-goers have populated Mount Hollywood with a

Divine Company of gods and goddesses.

The screen writer would do well to reflect on this for, while cameras cannot roll until story and words are put on paper, a more practical understanding of the true situation may help him to say better what he wants to say. Alas, the mass reaction to the best pictures is not yet how good the story is but how effectively the star-hero is presented in his or her mythological role.

While this is not a conscious process on the part of hero worshippers, perhaps one day, like Pavlov's dogs, they can be conditioned to something more adult and interesting by the screen writer's knowledge of their folklore responses to symbols for good and evil and in-between states of behavior.

The Norse, Greeks and Romans heard the same legends of their gods so many times over the years that they came to personify each of the characters with a human form. Zeus was a strong old man with a long beard; Mercury wore a little cap and sported tiny wings on his feet;

Venus had the perfect feminine figure, and so on. Our film audiences were able to quickly personify their gods, for they could see the gods actually enacting heroic adventures. The gods of Wisdom, Love, War, and Strength were before their eyes in human form.

Gods of War like James Cagney or Alan Ladd perform superhuman feats of strength in overcoming far superior enemies. Humphrey Bogart takes beatings that would be fatal to a mere mortal and comes out with one band aid and a smile. Errol Flynn out-duels as many as twenty soldiers at one time. Hedy Lamarr wakes up every morning with a perfect hair-do, and not one wrinkle in her lace nightgown. And lo and behold among the many goddesses and lesser goddesses, there is not one who was flat chested.

JUST as Zeus never made a wrong decision, Mercury never lost a race, Apollo never was cuckolded; so the gods of Mount Hollywood are invincible and forever beautiful. Alan Ladd might be called any name or

given any background; he is still handsome, virile, Alan Ladd, the same god concept in various adventures; as unchangeable as Zeus.

Like the modern movie audience, the ancients were convinced of the superhuman qualities of the gods by the stories they were told of great feats, but these tales were only the high points of the existence of the gods. The Olympus assembly was worshipped twenty-four hours a day.

Just so, the actual movies are only the more important exciting adventures of the deities. Almost as important are the off screen evenings at Mocambo, Ciro's, the Trocadero, Lady Mendl's; an afternoon around the pool; breakfast at the Hunt Club. Was Greer Garson seen at Slapsy Maxie's with Charles Boyer? The answer is of equal importance with whether she wins Clark Gable in her Saga called *Adventure*. Does Ginger Rogers wear a gingham apron in the kitchen and is she happy with her husband? That is just as vital to her worshippers as what she wears in *It Had To Be You*, and whether she loves Cornel Wilde.

THE Screen Story and the Daily Routine and two parts of the same thing; the Life of a god or goddess on Mount Hollywood. So fan magazines sell by the millions telling how the gods live apart from their studios; movie columnists and commentators make their salaries by telling the worshippers of the day to day events in the Divine Lives; autograph hunters crave the signatures—not of the man seen in a movie, but of the god himself.

But there is an important difference between Mount Olympus and Mount Hollywood. The ancient gods, being composite products of the story tellers' minds, had no human personification. They never appeared on earth to be examined and tested. But these modern gods are not really gods at all. They are actors and actresses, human and vulnerable, who through camera trickery, and words and deeds thought up by writers, are made to look like the god concepts.

The characteristics of the role

developed in screenplay after screenplay have become synonymous with the actor, and the worshippers regard these two separate concepts as one and the same.

It was only natural that the Thomas Committee would ask the opinions of several actors about some complicated proposed legislation. These actors are Zeus or Apollo gods and the Committee was humbly addressing the divinities it had seen on the screen, for divine guidance. The words of Judge Hardy or C. Aubrey Smith would have been even more potent, for to the populace these actors are Zeus and Jupiter, all wise and all knowing.

The movie industry accepts the god concept and uses all its wealth and energy to further it. The unwritten law is that the Public conception of a god must never be destroyed by a novel role, and the few exceptions like Deanna Durbin in *Christmas Holiday* have been disastrous.

The gods could not change. Zeus was Zeus. Jupiter was Jupiter. Wodin was Wodin. And Garbo is always Garbo.

Remember Camille? It was advertised on the screen as "GARBO TALKS! . . . GARBO LOVES TAYLOR" The consumptive Camille was only a very transparent mask for a goddess to wear in a Saga of her adventures.

For the film *Adventure*, the important selling point was "GABLE'S BACK AND GARSON'S GOT HIM."

The Hucksters was only incidentally an expose of radio malpractices. On the screen it emerged as a romantic adventure of the Apollo god Gable with the lesser goddess Deborah Kerr.

When *Cass Timberlane* was screened, who cared about the problems of Sinclair Lewis' characters—a small town couple have marital troubles? What was important was how Spencer Tracy was going to win Lana Turner.

Any picture featuring a god or goddess of the Cinema must become a mere Saga of the god's romances or struggles. The Play is no longer

the Thing. The Thing is a proper backdrop for a god; a Saga that will further the Public's particular god concept.

BUT there are obligations to being a god. A deity must never be caught in anything out of character.

Errol Flynn, an Eros god, may be involved in many romantic escapades without endangering his career. Such behavior is natural to his Olympian assignment. On the other hand, a Comic god like Roscoe Arbuckle was ruined by one fall from grace, because he had destroyed his own deity conception.

Lana Turner can spread her private love life all over the front pages and her worshippers only lavish more sacrifices on her altar. For Aphrodite is expected to love love. But any Diana or June goddess would be driven from the Temple by the same publicity.

Comic god Charles Chaplin talks serious politics and the populace clamors for his hide. But any number of Zeus gods could say the same things without attack.

Lew Ayres, the esthetic god of *All Quiet On The Western Front* and the *Doctor Kildare* series could be a Conscientious Objector in the war and be admired for his stand. Thor or Mars gods would have been forever ruined by the same sincere convictions.

W. C. Fields, a Bacchus god, could make a career of liquor and his worshippers loved it. Any other type of god publicly displaying his drinking would have been outlawed from the industry.

In a Broadway Play, the audience cares little about the actor's daily life. They are watching an actor tell a story, and his off stage existence has nothing to do with his role in the play. But the movie audience is another thing. The story is only the setting for a god's current adventure, and woe to the god who lets his worshippers down either in his home or on the screen.

You can't tell this audience that

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You Know How They Are

A Story

By

DWIGHT TAYLOR

I want to state right here and now that I'm not much of a writer. I used to be an assistant director in motion pictures. I can take a lot of punishment, and that's about all. I made enough dough to retire to Glendale where I raise rabbits with my wife's assistance. But she says I ought to write the story of Art MacGuinness and Perry Wall. She says there's something about it that's interesting, and that I should try it because I'm the only one who knows the inside. I don't know the inside. I don't know the inside. I don't know anything. But she says to write it, so here goes.

Art MacGuinness, the guy I worked for, was a great practical joker. Some of his jokes were sort of cruel, but he was a good motion picture director, and that covers a lot of jokes. It just depends on whether you are in the chips or not. I remember when we were working for the old Atlas Film Corporation on Yucca Street we needed some lions for a jungle picture. Art had me send out to Gay's for a couple of lions, and when they arrived he thought he'd play a joke on Sol Bamberger who was producing the picture. Sol was a pioneer in the business—started out selling lemonade in the nickelodeons and built up from that. He was getting pretty old when we worked for him. Art wanted to put the lions in his office. The idea was that when Sol came in he'd get a fright, and everybody else would get a laugh. Of course the lions were harmless, but even a "work" lion can look bad if you come upon it unexpectedly. I told Art I didn't think his idea was so good. But you couldn't talk to Art.

Once he got an idea it was the greatest idea in the world—until he got another one. You know how they are.

Well, we laughed about the idea of what Sol's face would look like when he saw the lions. Art kept telling it and the crew kept laughing until they could hardly laugh any more. I laughed too—after all, none of us was working for peanuts. Well, the cats arrived and Art had the trainer release them in Sol's office. Sol had gone to the Men's Room. Most of the gang were gathered around out in the hall, trying to keep from laughing, when Sol comes out and goes back into his office. He took one look at the lions and fell over in a dead faint. That sort of put a damper on the festivities and we had to throw cold water on him and send for a doctor and he went home early. The next day he died. It seems something went wrong with his ticker. Art sent a beautiful bunch of flowers to the funeral and he received a nice letter of thanks from Mrs. Bamberger. But I didn't feel so good about it.

I just tell you this to give you an example of Art's humor. He wasn't so good at the wise-crack or off-hand remark, but when it came to the hot-foot or the electrified chair he was as clever as Oscar Wilde. In a nice way, of course. But what I want to tell about is Art and Perry Wall.

Perry was one of the handsomest leading men of his time. He had a profile like on an old two-cent stamp—but he was a terrible lush. In the silent days that didn't matter so much—we could hold him up from behind and lean him against a book-case or

something—but when talkies came along it was not so good. His speech was so thick that you couldn't mix it and it sounded as if a mouse had gotten into the sound equipment. Perry had a terrific following amongst the female sex and it was hard for the studio to think of giving him up. They tried to get a sibilant-comber for awhile—some guy who would go through the script and try to take out all the S's—but it wouldn't work. Perry was through. For a year or two after that you could see him hanging around the bars on Vine St., and then he disappeared from public view. Some people said he had gone back to his mother in Wisconsin. But he was really lying on a bed in a cheap Boarding House downtown and couldn't get up.

I happen to know this because he wrote a letter to Art. They had worked together in the old days, and Perry spoke of old times and so forth and like-a that. But he never mentioned Lola Meredith. That was a touchy subject between them, and I guess he knew enough to let sleeping dogs lie. Lola Meredith had been quite a dish, with the long curls and gingham dresses that used to be the mark of a good woman. Half these dolls that they use for heroines today wouldn't have been allowed in the pictures in the old days, even as a heavy. You had to draw the line somewhere. Well, Art had figured on marrying Lola at one time, but Perry moved in on her, and when Perry moved in on a dame in those days that was it, brother. They got married for awhile and lived in a big house at Santa Monica, but she

couldn't stand his drinking and bowed out. Some people said she took up social work or something. At any rate, she was never heard of again amongst the picture crowd.

Art took it pretty hard, I guess. He had told Louella Parsons and bought a ring with a diamond big enough to choke a horse. Perry and Art didn't speak after that, and I was sort of surprised at Perry writing this letter, but I guess when a feller gets down far enough he doesn't stand on ceremony. At any rate, Art didn't seem to hold any grudge. When he got this letter he told me to get downtown and see how he was.

Well, he wasn't all right. The place stank like a pig-pen, and you practically had to wade through newspapers and bottles to get to the bed. His profile looked as if it had had a losing fight with a buzz-saw. The only remnant of the old days with his scrapbook which he kept under his pillow. He seemed to think it was valuable, for some reason. I told him I was sorry to see him this way, and tried to slip him the fin that Art had given me. But he wouldn't take it. He said he didn't want charity, he wanted work. There was a sort of flash of the old ham in the way he said it, and I thought at first he was acting, but he wouldn't take the dough so I had to hie me back to Beverly Hills to tell the boss. The boss didn't like it. He'd gotten himself all set to do something nice by giving his old enemy a fin, and now the poor sap wouldn't take it. His idea of himself had gone wrong. You know how they are.

After a moment Art calmed down and got to thinking:

"I know what's the matter," he said. "Perry Wall was a big shot in the old days. I was only a punk assistant director like you, when he was America's Sweetheart. He's proud. He doesn't like the switch. I think I'll give him a small part—a walk-on. It'll help him out—and think of the publicity!"

Well, I wasn't too sure of this walk-on stuff—even a walk-on has to be able to walk—but Art had the bit in his teeth again and there was no holding him. "I'll give him a good

talking to, and he won't let me down," Art said. "The trouble is he's proud."

We hopped into Art's Dusenbergs and drove back downtown to give Perry a talking to. Perry was lying in the same position on the bed I'd left him, surrounded by the bottles and papers, and he looked up startled when Art came in as if he hadn't expected to see him. He started to try to struggle up out of the bed, as if he was going to make a speech or something, but Art shoved him down again, saying "Now you listen to me" and Boy, did he lay it on! He pointed out how Perry had thrown away his career, and that all his friends had become disgusted with him, but that he (Mr. Art McGod McGuinness) was going to give him another chance. He said that in the old days Perry had high-hatted him once in awhile, but that didn't mean anything to him because he was bigger than such small considerations, and he was quite willing to let bygones be bygones. This is the closest he got to mentioning Lola. He made Perry swear a solemn oath that he would not take a drink until the picture was finished and, as there was no Bible in that particular part of L.A., he made him swear on the scrapbook which, as far as Perry was concerned, was just as good.

"I'll never forget this, Art," said Perry. "I'll vindicate your faith in me, I swear it—and my public's faith in me."

There were tears in his eyes when he said it—and they were not glycerine.

MONDAY we had a call for 8:30 a.m. The first thing I saw when I came on the set was Perry. The opus we were working on was some chi-chi about a society lawyer, and there was a big banquet scene where this lawyer gets married to a girl who he has defended for murder, and then he finds that she has really done the murder, and he murders her in order not to spoil his reputation. It was a modern picture. No curls or gingham anywhere. This lawyer character seemed to have more

friends than an Irishman who has just won a lottery, and the wedding scene cost us plenty of extras. We were anxious to get it in the can. Wardrobe had outfitted Perry in soup-and-fish with white tie and he didn't look half bad. The clothes seemed to have done something for him. He carried himself as if this big affair had been given entirely for him. Some of the old-times recognized him, of course, and came forward and shook him by the hand, and said how well he was looking and how was his mother in Wisconsin? Everybody played it straight. But the young squirt who played the lead didn't give him a tumble. He had been a life-guard at Far Rockaway three years before, and he thought the world had been created the day he got off the train in L.A. He didn't see how it had anything to do with him. You know how they are.

Art sent for the guy who dreamed up this opus and told him to put in a little scene where the hostess gets up from the table and steps forward to greet Perry. "I'm so glad you could come, Mr. Wall!" was her line, and Perry was supposed to say "I'm so glad to be here!" That's all, but at least it was a line, and Art figured it would get a big hand at the preview from the old-timers. After that Perry was supposed to mingle with the rest of the crowd, with just a flash of him dancing with some frail to show that he could still get around. Well, we got the shot of him dancing with the frail, but there was some trouble with the play-back and Central Casting, (out of respect for Perry, I suppose), had sent us a group of merrymakers that they must have got from the Old Peoples Home, so that it was 6 p.m. before we got the stuff in the camera and Perry had not yet done his little scene where he said "I'm so glad to be here." That was a good break for him, because it meant we'd have to call him back the next day and he'd get an extra check. But he looked pretty tired, what with the excitement and all, so Art told him to go home and get a good rest. "And remember—" he said, with that prop laugh, and shak-

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Photo Finish

Report on Insurance

WE qualified for the group insurance plan at the last minute and by a slight margin. It was tough going, but it wasn't dull. There was all the dramatic element of the old college try in the ninth inning with two out and the bases full.

We're not out of the woods yet, if you don't mind changing the metaphor. The insurance company is prepared to put the policy into effect on the first of June, **BUT ONLY IF ALL THE CHECKS FOR THE FIRST SEMI-ANNUAL PREMIUM ARE IN THE GUILD OFFICE BY THAT DATE !**

It must be considered the personal responsibility of everyone who has applied to send in his check. The importance of this can be made clear by pointing out that last year members of the local Bar Association collected \$40,000 in indemnities under the identical plan. If any of us fail to support the scheme now that we are so near success, we may be the indirect cause of depriving someone else of assistance in illness or accident.

The Insurance company has agreed to accept between now and the first of June any additional applications from members who missed the boat in the first group. You may, if you have changed your mind or have belatedly realized the desirability of the plan, qualify for it by merely sending in your check and application. After the first, your qualification will be subject to a questionnaire as to your physical condition.

PAUL GANGELIN

Report on Federal Credit Union

FOLLOWING a general membership election of officers to the SWG Federal Credit Union on May 10th, the organization moved rapidly toward its operational stage when its Board of Directors held a policy meeting on May 12th. Our Credit Union is one of the most important items on the Guild's present program of economic service to the membership.

Mr. Sam Mitchell, the Federal Credit Union Examiner, conducted the policy meeting when the following rules were adopted:

1. Loans can only be made to members of SWG, active or associate, their immediate families, the employees of the Guild and the Guild itself.
2. Shares will cost \$5 each.
3. An application for a share will cost 50 cents and the share must be paid for at 25 cents a week.
4. The first share must be bought outright for \$5 and an initial fee of 25 cents. The \$5 goes to the member's passbook account and the fee to a special fund for reimbursing the Credit Union for bad loans that might be made.
5. No member may invest more than \$1,000 in the Credit Union.
6. Loans will be granted according to the Federal rules for secured and unsecured loans.
7. No officer of the Credit Union may borrow from it a sum larger than he has invested.

An Educational Committee, required by the Federal Act, was set up to inform the Guild membership and to enlist studio representatives. It consists of Richard Murphy, *Chairman*, Franklyn Adreon, Luci Ward, Frederic Frank, Marvin Borowsky and Erwin Franklin.

The Hollywood-McCadden Place Branch of the Citizen's National Bank was designated depository of funds.

As members of the California Credit Union League, the SWG organization automatically becomes a member of the Credit Union National Association, an international group extending from British Columbia to Hudson's Bay and from Newfoundland to Hawaii.

The following are the Credit Union Officers:

Frank Partos, *President*; Wells Root, *Vice President*; Erwin Gelsey, *Treasurer*; S. K. Lauren, *Secretary*; Alice Penneman, *Assistant Treasurer*.

Board of Directors: Frank Partos, Wells Root, Edward Eliscu, S. K. Lauren, Jay Dratler, Lester Cole, Erwin Gelsey.

Credit Committee: Edmund Hartmann, Harold Buchman, Winston Miller.

Supervisors: Jack Natteford, Jane Murfin, Allen Boretz.

The Board of Directors shall determine the basic policies. The Credit Committee shall pass on all applications for loans. The Supervisors are responsible for the auditing of the books and are held accountable to the Federal Credit Union examiner for all operations and the conduct of officers. The Credit Committee and the Supervisors have no voice in policy-making.

JACK NATTEFORD

Is It Deductible?

By

MORRIS and GEORGE PRIMOFF

With the end of the fiscal year six months away, it has been suggested that screen writers (both employed and unemployed) give some thought at this time to required material for Federal and State Income Tax returns. Now is the time to keep or get that receipt to prove a deduction, to file it away and to know where you've filed it. Special attention is called to the paragraph on Operating Net Loss Deduction which may be helpful to those who had writing income in the last two years but in the current year.

To this end, the Screen Writer has asked Morris W. and George Primoff, certified public accountants of New York City and members of the New York Bar Association to make some practical recommendations for writers. This article was written in collaboration with David K. Stern, C.P.A., resident partner in the Los Angeles office of Primoff & Company and auditor of SWG.

DOLLARS thrown away thoughtlessly through tax ignorance concerning business deductions may mount to sizeable sums over a period of years.

Your Uncle Sam places great emphasis upon the fact that each taxpayer should pay his just tax and not a penny more, and does actually encourage taxpayers to learn how to compute their true tax liability.

All business deductions are scrutinized in the examination of a return by the Bureau of Internal Revenue and each taxpayer should avoid putting obstacles in the way of the Government's fair decision as to deductibility. Grouping of many items under one category on the return should be avoided. Each item should be clearly denominated so that the Government Examiner will know what expense has been sustained without the necessity for needless correspondence or questioning. Ambiguity on returns has often caused needless field examinations just as inadequate records can result in costly litigation, unnecessary annoyances and wasteful consumption of time once a field examination has been initiated.

Authority for the deduction of writers' expenses is derived from Section 23 (a) (1) (A) of the Internal Revenue Code, which states the following:

"In General — All the ordinary and necessary expenses paid or incurred during the taxable year in carrying on any trade or business, including a reasonable allowance for salaries or other compensation for personal services actually rendered; traveling expenses (including the entire amount expended for meals and lodging) while away from home in the pursuit of a trade or business; and rentals or other payments required to be made as a condition to the continued use or possession, for purposes of the trade or business, of property to which the taxpayer has not taken or is not taking title or in which he has no equity."

Regulations III, Sec. 29.23 (a)-1, which is applicable to the aforesaid section of the Code states, among other things, as follows:

"Among the items included in business expenses are management expenses, commissions, labor, supplies, incidental repairs, operating expenses

of automobiles used in the trade or business, traveling expenses while away from home solely in the pursuit of a trade or business, advertising and other selling expenses, together with insurance premiums against fire, storm, theft, accident, or other similar losses in the case of a business, and rental for the use of business property."

Additional light on the subject may be gleaned from Regulations III, Sec. 29.23(a)-5 which has this to say on the question of professional expenses:

"A professional man may claim as deductions the cost of supplies used by him in the practice of his profession, expenses paid in the operation and repair of an automobile used in making professional calls, dues to professional societies and subscriptions to professional journals, the rent paid for office rooms, the cost of the fuel, light, water, telephone, etc., used in such offices, and the hire of office assistants. Amounts currently expended for books, furniture and professional instruments, the useful life of which is short, may be deducted."

What, then, in plain parlance, are the business expenses that may be

deducted by a member of the writing profession?

Rent paid for office or studio. A proper place to work in is naturally a requirement of every writer, and if the office or studio is used in connection with the writers' business, the rent paid therefor is deductible. If a portion of a writer's home is used as an office or studio in connection with the writer's business, a reasonable proportion of the home expenses applicable and allocable to the upkeep of the office or studio may be claimed as an expense. Likewise, if a writer owns his own home, and if a portion of his home is used as an office or studio in connection with the writer's business, a percentage of depreciation of the cost of the building may be deducted as an expense.

Office and Studio Expenses. The cost of fuel, light, water, cleaning service and telephone used in the office or studio, and compensation to office assistants are deductible items. If some of these items are paid out at home expenses because a writer uses part of his home as an office or studio, then he may deduct a portion of such payments as an expense.

Agent's Commissions. Commissions paid to agents are fully deductible. Most writers prepare their returns on the cash basis, that is, they report income in the year received and deduct expenses in the year paid. For those on the cash basis who have highly fluctuating incomes, and who make direct payments to agents, it is especially important to exercise extreme caution to make the payments in a year when they can get the greatest benefit. Delay in payment of a commission may result in losing the deduction in the year when income was high and getting the allowance in the year when income was low.

Compensation Paid. Compensation paid to secretary and assistants and stenographic fees expended in connection with the writer's business are deductible and so are all unemployment and social security taxes paid by the writer in connection with salaries paid to his employees.

Books, Periodicals and Recordings. Cost of books and recordings of short

life, newspapers, magazines acquired for use in connection with the writer's profession are allowable expenses.

Stationery, Postage and Supplies. Expenditures for manuscript paper, binders, mimeograph materials, printing, postage, typewriter machine rental, typewriter supplies and repairs, etc., are fully deductible if the expenses are in connection with the writer's professional duties. A writer office equipment, such as typewriters, desks, files, chairs and other office furnishings that are not of short life.

Telephone and Telegraph. Telephone and telegraph expenses in connection with a writer's business are deductible. If a writer uses his home telephone for business purposes he may deduct the proportion applicable to his business. It is all a matter of proof and if the home telephone is used substantially for business purposes some adequate record should be kept to justify the deduction if called upon to do so.

Traveling Expenses. Traveling expenses of a writer in connection with his business are deductible. As obvious as this statement may appear to be on the surface, there are obstacles that, at times, make it difficult to determine how the Bureau of Internal Revenue will ultimately rule on a particular item. In the average case, however, it should be comparatively easy for a writer to determine whether his expenditures for traveling expenses are deductible especially after he reads a portion of what the United States Supreme Court had to say on January 2, 1946 in *Comm. v. J. M. Flowers* (66 S.Ct.250). In that case, Mr. Justice Murphy, who wrote the Court's majority opinion, stated as follows:

"It (Sec. 23(2) (1) (A) authorizing the deduction for traveling expenses) is to be read in light of the interpretation given it by . . . Treasury Regulations. . . . This interpretation, which is precisely the same as that given to identical traveling expense deductions authorized by prior and successive Revenue Acts, is deemed to possess implied legislative approval and to have the effect of law. . . . This interpretation states that 'Traveling expenses, as ordinarily

understood, include railroad fares and meals and lodging. If the trip is undertaken for other than business purposes, the railroad fares are personal expenses and the meals and lodging are living expenses. If the trip is solely on business, the reasonable and necessary traveling expenses, including railroad fares, meals and lodging are business expenses. . . . Only such expenses as are reasonable and necessary in the conduct of the business and directly attributable to it may be deducted. Commuters' fares are not considered as business expenses and are not deductible.'"

The Court then laid down the following three conditions, all of which must be present, before a traveling expense deduction may be made under Section 23(a) (1) (A) of the Internal Revenue Code:

"(1) The expense must be a reasonable necessary traveling expense, as that term is generally understood. This includes such items as transportation, fares and food and lodging expenses incurred while traveling;

(2) The expense must be incurred 'while away from home';

(3) The expense must be incurred in pursuit of business. This means that there must be a direct connection between the expenditure and the carrying on of trade or business of the taxpayer or of his employer. Moreover, such an expenditure must be necessary or appropriate to the development and pursuit of the business or trade."

IT will be noted that the second condition is that the expense must be incurred "while away from home." There is much law on what constitutes being away from home. If a writer is employed permanently in Los Angeles and he chooses to live elsewhere for personal convenience the likelihood is that his expenses in Los Angeles would not be considered deductible traveling expenses. If however, his residence elsewhere is coupled with a business reason for living there and claiming domicile there, his traveling expenses in Los Angeles would

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"Berlin Express Diary"

THE only unique feature about *Berlin Express* was the fact that this was to be the first picture where American actors were to be permitted into occupied Germany. There was a good deal of red tape, Army and State Department clearances, as well as a careful checkup by the F.B.I. of all the individuals involved in this project. Billeting and food problems in occupied Germany were the biggest obstacles to overcome before the Army granted us permission to bring actors and a crew. On a specified date when production started, twenty-seven members of cast and crew were flown to Paris. The Army had stipulated that all transportation equipment used during the making of the picture was to be provided by RKO. This entailed investigation of the French motion picture industry. In all of Paris there was only one camera truck. After much bargaining we finally managed to rent this truck with its owner-driver's services. Additional cars were just as difficult to secure. They also have their "Honest Jean's" and "Monsieur Kelly Voiture Companies." We ended up with a Peugeot, a Simca, a fifteen ton truck and one ailing Hotchkiss, which wheezed, puffed and expired outside of Strasbourg. Production items, such as lumber, dollies, nails, rope, hoses, sprays, lighting equipment entailed combing the black markets of Paris. This is normal procedure since the French motion picture industry has, up until this time, been unable to replace the equipment stolen by the Germans during the occupation.

The sequences in the film that were made in Paris with the cooperation of French crews proved that the workers were exceptionally efficient. There are several national characteristics to be met with such as, two

hours for lunch, electricians who come to work in carpet slippers with two bottles of wine on a string but this was easily accepted when the quality of their work was observed on the screen. Shooting in the heart of Paris is far less difficult than working in New York. This simplification is brought about by the French film industry which is partially subsidized by the government and quickly clears all permits. Considering the scope and size of some of our locations, The Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, The Gare de L'Est and Montemartre, interference was negligible.

WHEN you leave Paris for occupied Germany, you again have to be cleared by representatives of the U. S. Military Government. At the present time no one is permitted into occupied Germany unless they are an accredited correspondent or a business representative authorized by the State Department. Billeting our large crew was the serious problem. The cast was at Bad Nauheim, an hour by autobahn from Frankfurt, the production staff was housed at the Excelsior and the Carlton Hotels situated in the heart of Frankfurt.

The scale of destruction in this city is beyond the ken of imagination. In fact, the photographing of ruins provided unforeseen obstacles. Four years of rain, sun and wind had faded the rubble into a colorless mass. Only proper cross lighting would pick up the terrifying devastation. Production schedules had to be revised to meet the requirements of the sun. This frequently took us from one end of the town to the other just to catch a portion of ruins under proper lighting. It would be impossible to duplicate the bomb blasted city with background or glass shots. They never

could attain the same unlimited depth and dimension that the actual scenes and people provided.

Like movie fans throughout the world the numbed citizens of Frankfurt watched our endeavors. Occupying forces, insecurity and undernourishment have made them a docile crowd. It is hard to visualize a world where the standard of currency is simply the cigarette. The desire for career and security all follow after the first wish, the desire for a good meal. This is the general picture of all of war destroyed Germany today. What resistance there is springs from the youth group. These were the Hitler Jungen—too young for the Army during the war and too young for workman's classification paper now that the catastrophe is over. Without work permits they drift from city to city—an untamed group of roving scavengers. Frequently you've read about them in newspapers—referred to as "Werewolves." At night their home is the railroad depots. Many a soldier or government employee has been struck down by one of these youthful delinquents for just a package of cigarettes.

LABOR is the most difficult problem to cope with in occupied Germany. The law, as it now stands, forbids trading with the enemy since no peace treaty has been written. The German currency is the Mark with dubious value, varying from ten cents to forty-three cents by American standards. The Americans use Occupation money predicated on the dollar value. The unofficial international tender in all zones is the cigarette. Roughly the current values are: a carton of cigarettes equals one thousand marks. One pound of coffee equals 500 marks, 24 chocolate bars

by Bert Granet

equal 500 marks. In order to legalize the illegal traffic, the United States Army has organized barter markets of its own. Here, American soldiers are permitted to trade in their food stuffs or cigarettes in possible exchange for some much wanted German item such as a camera, binoculars, Meissen China, etc.

OUR actual production shots required extras for the backgrounds, with no possibility of compensating them for their services. The situation solved itself in a unique manner. Since the Germans had no place to go and very little to do they willingly donated their services for the opportunity to appear in the picture.

Casting the bit parts presented more difficulties. Centers of acting talent were literally non-existent. Our only lead was a German production of "Mourning Becomes Electra" that was playing in Weisbaden under Army auspices. Fortunately there were several superb actors in the company. Our economic problems became a little more severe, cigarettes, after all, were ridiculously unfair payment for services of such value. One actor nervously inquired, "If it wasn't too much—could he have a pair of pants for his service?" The deal was consummated for a pair of the producer's pants. After turning in an excellent job, a day later he came pleading, "he had made a mistake, acted hastily, instead of the pants could he have a CARE package?" He was told he could have both. He became highly indignant, his reputation for never taking advantage of a producer was at stake! Hollywood agents please note. It took a good deal of tact to make him take both items. While the actual value

of the CARE package and the pants seem insignificant, on the German market they were worth thousands of marks.

FINDING production help was another thing. After searching diligently we found several grips and electricians who had worked for UFA, now stationed at Heidelberg with a U.S.O. theatrical unit. Special work permits from the State of Hesse and the Army were required to permit them to travel from Heidelberg to Frankfurt. Fred Gronich, our Army Liaison man, had great foresight when he sent CARE packages to Europe to tempt them, since most jobs and the low rations are insufficient incentive to make the men want to work. The Germans have developed a barbed humor about their low caloric rations. A grip who had been carrying a heavy camera tersely commented, "Well, there goes my 1500 calories for today."

Relations with the United States Army were exceptional on this project. The calibre of the Army mind surprised us in more ways than one by their liberal attitude and exceptional tolerance. Their desire to have a democratic Germany against untold political obstacles is genuine. The people had seen their country cut up into four separate divisions with four different forms of nationalism thrown at them. The confused German has now reached the point where he is waiting for the best offer. Like every other nation in Europe it is hard to sell Germans the "American Way." The reason is simple—a normal psychosis takes place. Here is a rich Uncle, Sam by name; if he contributes food and material for reconstruction, it never seems to be enough. If he doesn't respond over-generously in

every case he is miserly, inconsiderate, a sated ogre intent on dominating the world. The Army has gone to long odds to reeducate, reindoctrinate these people against the tremendous obstacles they face. Democracy, itself, is a problem to sell to the people of Europe. Its prime purpose is to permit people to function for themselves in their selection of leaders. Inactivity, due to dietary deficiency, various forms of incipient dictatorship, have caused a lassitude that makes Germans incapable of selecting government. The side that provides the easiest way out is the one that will eventually win Germany.

Interesting because of its current position in the news today is the trip on the "Berliner" from Frankfurt to Berlin. By now most are aware that Berlin is a "heart" island in the Russian zone. The city itself is quarantined into four Allied sectors. Three of these sectors are serviced with supplies, food and rations at Russian discretion since the rail lines run through their zone. The highway and the forty mile International air lane are also subject to the whims of their transportation officers.

BEFORE one proceeds to Berlin from Frankfurt, military permits are again necessary. The travel orders are written in English and Russian, since occasionally, even preceding the current crisis, the Russians have halted the train for various reasons. This activity takes place in the one hundred and forty mile stretch between Helmstaadt and Berlin. In transit through the Russian zone the train carries a wireless car. This is the only source of communication that the United States Army maintains during the trip. This single

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The Goldwyn Fallacy

IT was a happy circumstance that brought together Ernest Pascal's "What IS a Screen Writer?" and Samuel Goldwyn's "Where Do You Go From Here?" in the April issue of this magazine. Mr. Goldwyn's article was a well-meant offer of help to writers to speak freely, but a comparative consideration of the two articles reveals in his the important fallacy which is at the heart of so much reckless criticism of screen writers. More than that, recognition of the fallacy points the way to a new and challenging possibility in making motion pictures — or at least some motion pictures.

The challenge is one that writers will be happy to meet. Will the producers meet it? Even producers like Mr. Goldwyn, who profess enlightened interest in breaking away from trite screen material? There's a way of changing things, but producers are warned in advance that it isn't a sure-fire way, and that while writers will have to risk their time, producers will have to risk money. That, however, seems fair enough. The writer's time is his working capital as money is the producer's.

Mr. Pascal threw into relief Mr. Goldwyn's fallacy by shredding away delusion and cant in analyzing the quintessential function of the screen writer as the motion picture industry is constituted at present. That function is, solely, to help insure profit in a vast real estate operation, to fill eighty-five million seats weekly in twenty thousand theatres. Only that and nothing more.

Mr. Goldwyn sounded a stirring call for writers who write "what is inside of them; what their reason, their emotions, their experience, their perceptions, dictate they must write." He wants writers to be, in his own

words, "truly creative artists." We're dying for the chance, Mr. Goldwyn, but we can't do it without your help.

A very loose term, indeed, "truly creative artist," but by Mr. Goldwyn's definition, specifically set forth, it clearly means a writer who expresses himself in disregard of formula, of the demands of the market, of the known preferences of studios or producers, and who will, further, insist on the transcription to film of his *Weltanschauung* exactly as he presents it, just as the writer in the theatre is free to do.

THIS is muddled thinking. No brigade of such iconoclastic spirits could possibly fill the seats in those twenty thousand parcels of real estate. Since motion pictures first crystallized into big business, their cost has made imperative the widest possible appeal to the widest possible audience. Inexorable limits are set the writer by the taste of that audience, its prejudices, its capacity for understanding. The motion picture story of today must fit cosily into the concepts of the good life or of entertainment as they are shared by eighty-five millions weekly. The writer whose daemon drives him to express a non-conforming concept, whose words are meant to break like thunderclaps through fogs of popular prejudice or habit, had better look to a smaller audience and a method of expression that uses less expensive machinery.

In the era of the comic book and the radio serial, the movies acquit themselves with relative dignity and honor, but the restrictions placed on the American motion picture story today are definite. Fundamentally it must be a love story. The protagonists must be attractive people, and all

must end well. That story cannot delve into the dark, tangled depths of human impulses and relationships, it cannot even toy lightly with them. It must remain on the glittering surface and there satisfy every adolescent's dream of romantic love.

You may cite deviations. Bette Davis, for instance, doesn't always get her man, but she doesn't get him with such grand passion and such exalted suffering that it's like going to the opera. Occasionally a group of men are in prison, or a submarine, or go looking for gold in Mexico. The fact that females are omitted from such pictures is hailed with awe by the critics and sometimes even accepted by many of the patrons. These do not affect the rule. There is also the welcome branching out into the so-called semi-documentary film, in which romance is subordinated, but this is an expansion of technique, not of basic subject matter.

THE time has come when producers are stirring restlessly, wondering if there isn't more to it than has been told, and audiences, we find, tend to stay away from pictures after attaining the age of thirty-five, having by then, presumably, discovered the facts of life. Hence the producers cry for new ideas and use the writer as a whipping-boy because he does not have them handy.

What new changes can be rung on the formula of a slick-paper romance between two pretty people? What chance has the writer of bringing to the screen what his perceptions dictate if he perceives issues and values and drama outside the pale of the formula? What if he happens to want to say, out of his experience, that there are stresses in married life which cast ominous shadows even as the star

by Paul Gangelin

and the leading lady go into the clinch? What if he perceives that "man's fate is tragic and his destiny shrouded in darkness" and has no glib reassurance to offer?

Should the trail-blazing writer ignore the star system? A great love story could be written about two ugly people, really and hopelessly ugly, who find in each other, for the very reason of their ugliness, affection, tenderness, the illusion of being desirable. Every gesture of love between two such people would be a thousand times more poignant because they had been rejected of all the world and found acceptance and tragic happiness only through their common misfortune.

COULD you find two stars who would make up to be really unattractive and stay that way through a picture, to the final fade out? If you could, could you find the audience that has been created for those stars in its usual seats in the neighborhood house? Not unless the girl took off her glasses and fluffed up her hair somewhere along the line and the man became his old self as soon as he had a shave and got into some decent clothes.

Should we assail the writer because he does not write stories so far from the expected norm? Certainly not. We shouldn't even be too rough on the producer for not wanting them. The mass audience would not accept even such variants as "*The Baker's Wife*," "*Harvest*," or "*Brief Encounter*." All of us together, writers and producers, are the victims of extravagance and bigness and must, in common sense, submit to the demands which these impose.

We do well within our prescribed framework every once and again. Mr.

Goldwyn himself did well with "*The Best Years of Our Lives*." That was an excellent picture, as you needn't be told, but strictly within the narrow limits of the stock romantic fable. There was not one hint that the result of uprooting people in war is often real tragedy, there was no suggestion that all is not for the best of all possible worlds. The young banker found his money-grubbing superiors responsive to a few hortatory and bibulous words, the soda-jerk lost a bawd and won in her place a lovely girl, finding, meanwhile, his true vocation, and even the cruelly mutilated sailor gained a good greater than his loss, a depth of love and understanding which could never have been his but for the catastrophe he suffered. And, no doubt, they all lived happily ever after.

There's nothing wrong with pictures based on love's finding a way, but they shouldn't be the only ones we make. Something can be done about that, which we'll discuss presently. First let us address ourselves to another aspect of Mr. Goldwyn's fallacy, one which screen writers themselves often use when they heap coals of fire on their own heads. This is the fallacious comparison of the screen writer and the dramatist of the theatre. Since there is no true basis of comparison between the situations of the producer of a play and the producer of a picture, there can be none between the men who prepare their wares for the one and the other.

IN the theatre, even the Brothers Shubert take a capital risk every time they open a play. They may engage good actors, they may have a good script, they probably own the theatre. But they still have no assurance that they won't lose a sizable

part of their shirts. They gamble on every opening night, and all participants gamble with them, which makes enterprise in the theatre fairly truly cooperative. It is a single roll of the dice, but if it succeeds the writer has an asset which is his as long as he may live. If it doesn't, he still has his original property, while the producer has nothing but his memories and his and his angels' cancelled checks.

In pictures the gamble of the producing companies is practically non-existent, or the margin for error is so wide that it need not concern us. The motion picture producer *knows* that he will get a sufficient minimum of bookings to cover his expenses whether one given picture is good or bad. He *knows* that a certain star name or combination of names will inevitably yield him a reasonably calculable return. If his receipts are unsatisfactory he can wait years to recoup, until the reports are in from the shooting galleries and the exchange in Tasmania.

Now, say writers are prepared to gamble with motion picture producers as we do with their brethren of the theatre. Then, if we put our salaries into the kitty, let them put in theirs, or give us a proportional drawing account, based on the amount of money that the picture can be anticipated to gross as a minimum, even before it is shot. Then, as in the theatre, when the picture is playing, cut us in on a percentage of profit over the minimum. And THEN, after the picture has run its course, as is the case of plays, let the property revert to us. You ask what about screenplays adapted from others writers' work? What about them? John Van Druten adapted "*I Remember Mamma*," from a novel, and as often as it is played he, as well as the author of the novel,

will receive royalties, time without end.

If producers want us to do our best unstintingly, even within the formula, let us, as Mr. Goldwyn suggests, by all means work as people do in the theatre, but let's *all* do it, not just the writers.

In complaining that writers say to him, "I can't even think about your story unless I'm being paid," Mr. Goldwyn overlooks the fact that the operative word is "your." Today the story is the producer's in every sense of possession. He owns the basic material, he can dictate the inclusion or omission of every line of dialogue, he is, in fact, by contract deemed to be the actual author, he, or M-G-M or something else incorporated in Delaware. Is it surprising that there should be a mildly venal and suspicious attitude on the part of the writer? That he lacks selfless enthusiasm for working on a story he cannot make "his," by no matter what effort or skill?

In passing, it should be understood that Mr. Goldwyn is not the personal target of this article. Rather, he is to be respected for the intention of the sentiments he voiced and to be thanked for giving writers the opportunity to clarify his thesis and to carry its implications further.

NOW we come to the challenge. We cannot ask the motion picture real estate enterprise to stop making pictures down the groove in the formula which more or less satisfactorily fills its eight-five million seats. But there is a possibility of making other pictures, filling other seats, appealing to another audience. Again, let us do as they do in the

theatre, where the producer spends only as much money as he considers wise in respect to a possible audience and seating capacity for a specific show.

The Theatre Guild, to illustrate briefly, does not commit itself to the point where it has to attract the patrons of Minsky in order to break even. The ordinary motion picture cannot be made for a selected audience like the Theatre Guild's. It costs too much money, and must, therefore, aim a little higher than Minsky and a little lower than the Theatre Guild. So be it.

We challenge producers to try something new, to take their proper place in revitalizing the American film, to make *some* pictures for a special audience. It could be done, not easily, but it could be done. As follows:

Pick an unusual group of stories for an unusual audience, without reference to the PTA, without requiring the interest of untold millions, stories that appeal to mature or at least inquiring minds. Make pictures at an absolute minimum, enlisting the co-operative participation of actors, writers, directors, cameramen. Let no one, including yourself, expect any sure return until it has been earned. Be prepared to be happy if you don't lose money. Forget about names. Cast as the story demands to be cast. Advertise these pictures as not being for the general public. Be bold and warn children of all ages to stay away, that this is not their cup of tea. Make a boast of denying the fetishes we are all hampered by. Reject, by rejecting their patronage, the right to apply their taboos of the many organizations that lay clammy hands on originality.

WHERE would you release such pictures? You can work it out. You control the machinery that would make releasing possible. There is a nucleus of theatres now that would welcome unconventional films from the American studios. Today they are playing foreign pictures or odds and ends. There are other theatres that can be conditioned to playing selected films for a limited audience, and can make money at it, theatres, for instance, in the thousands of college towns in this country, with a ready-made and possibly eager audience. There are, even, ordinary neighborhood houses which have been wallowing under a burden of ineffectual A's and lamentable B's that might for three days or a week each month like to have something unusual to spur the lagging interest of the disillusioned greybeards over thirty-five.

This program, of course, could be carried out only if such films were made with the utmost economy, if you bravely face the fact that you are gambling, if you took a real chance — like the producers in the theatre. But what are you afraid of? There are many of you producers and producing companies who have made out of motion pictures fortunes which put you beyond any conceivable danger of going broke if you gamble on a reasonable scale.

Do producers really want vital and independent writing? Then they must realize the crippling restriction that is imposed on stories by the mass production of pictures and they must take a calculated risk, provide the opportunity to make vital and independent pictures, and create the market for them.



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E D I T O R I A L

UNLIKE other large industries, ours offers little ultimate security for the mass of experienced professionals which it has taken some trouble to qualify. Too much of the element of chance is permitted to influence the market value of writers, directors, players, cameramen and similar specialists. A man's proven ability to produce entertainment essentials, the fruit of long study and training in motion pictures, is too frequently victimized by that old chestnut, "You're only as good as your last picture." The less recent the picture, the lower the estimate—and many war veterans have been completely forgotten. With employment conditions as they are, the opportunity for screen writers to achieve current samples of their craft is receding.

This prodigal waste of manpower, which existed even in good times, should be faced with a sense of realism. Railing against the industry and contending that it owes its members a living is no solution to the immediate problem of how to weather existing conditions. The divorcement action or increased production next year to meet the needs of television will not improve our situation tomorrow morning.

A number of screen writers are returning to their former endeavors as novelists, short story writers and playwrights. Considerable original screen material is being written with one mimeographing office reporting that 80 per cent of its work is on original *screenplays* while it was only 15 per cent a year ago. Writers, the majority of them still anxious to pursue a career in the industry, are certainly not idle while waiting for studio employment. But what other *practical* and *realistic* steps can be taken to create paying work for the experienced screen writer? This magazine opens its pages for such discussion.

Report on Writer-Producer Credits

Membership approval of the new set of rules for writer-producer credits was voted at the May 10th meeting. These rules were proposed by the Credits Committee to guide arbitration committees in their understanding of Paragraph F in the recently negotiated, new Schedule A which will be signed by the producers. That paragraph provides:

"Unless the screen play writing is done entirely without the collaboration of any other writer, no designation of tentative screen play credit to a production executive shall become final or effective unless approved by a credit arbitration as herein provided, in accordance with the Guild rules for the determination of such credit."

The term production executive is interpreted by the Guild to mean writing directors and/or writing producers.

The following rules have been adopted to govern writing credits of production executives when other writers are involved:

1. The production executive must signify in writing to the Guild and to any other writer assigned to the script that he intends to claim collaboration credit. This must be done at the time he starts to work as a writer.

2. At the time of the credit arbitration, the production executive must assume the burden of proving that he had in fact worked on the script as a writer and had assumed his full share of the writing, which, in any event, must amount to a contribution of no less than 50 per cent of the final script.

3. If two or more writers, in addition to the production executive are employed, and the production executive has contributed at least 50 per cent of the final script, that writer contributing the largest additional percentage shall share credit with the production executive, provided his is a substantial contribution, without necessarily being the usually required $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent.

4. In the instance of a team working in active collaboration, one or both of whom exercise the function of production executive, in order for the production executive to receive credit it will be required that the team contribute at least 60 per cent of the final script. Any writer, however, who works on the script will be entitled to credit for any substantial contribution without necessarily meeting the usually required $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent.

Decisions of Arbitration Committees are based upon written material. In the event of conflicting claims, written evidence always prevails. Production executives, as well as writers, should therefore keep dated copies of all material written by them for submission to the Arbitration Committee.

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Judith Podselver

(Continued from Inside Front Cover)

have gone to the government for taxes. But the number of pictures which can be shown in Denmark is subsequently very limited.

UNDER such conditions, the number of movies—12 to 14—turned out each year by the three major Danish studios and a few independent companies, is quite remarkable. The most important of Danish directors is still Carl Theo Dreyer whose picture *Days of Wrath* has been quite a success both in Paris and London this winter. Another Danish picture has been well received abroad: *Red Meadows*, a story of the Resistance directed by a former actress Bodil Ipsen with the technical assistance of Lau Lauritzen. Both have joined again to produce *Afspreet*, a good realistic film along the French school lines. There are four other directors who rank easily with other countries: Johan Jacobsen who made *A Chord of Music*, on the pattern of *Tales of Manhattan*—Ole Palsbo, the director of a social research on unwed mothers, *Christen Jul*—Bjorne Henning-Hensen who put on the screen Martin Andersen Nexos' famous novel *Ditte Manneskebarn*.

Most of these directors have learned their technique by making documentaries, for Denmark produces short subjects under a remarkable system

which seems to work well, since 150 short-reelers have been turned out from 1941 (date at which the system was started) to 1946.

The government uses a considerable amount of the taxes it collects from exhibitors to produce documentaries under the sponsorship of two organizations: the Government Motion Picture Committee gathers from all departments and commissions representative subjects of general interest to be produced by the studios; the Danish Cultural Film, where all cultural and touristic organizations, schools and unions are represented, is subventioned by the government and produces its own films. As the features produced by those two organizations are distributed without cost through all picture houses, there is practically no outlet for any other type of short feature production.

That conception of the documentary as a public service from the Government enables a considerable amount of young movie technicians to turn out pictures without commercial pre-occupations and to try out new formulas. The Danish method of documentaries which has been very much influenced by the British and especially Arthur Elton who came to work in Denmark, has already produced interesting features before the war, most of them directed by Karl Roos and Theodor Christensen; most noteworthy was their short on Denmark's main fuel: peat. Christensen

carried on his informative work even under the occupation. With his camera hidden in a truck he went along with his Resistance comrades in sabotaging expeditions and made his picture *Your Freedom Is At Stake* under the Germans' very noses.

The fact that saboteurs were willing to take a cameraman along and thereby increase the risk of their being caught in case the film would fall into the Germans' hands, is another proof of the general interest documentaries arouse in Denmark. Everyone wants to have a part in them. And it is due to that general interest, no doubt, that such a small country has been able to turn out technicians and pictures which have proved a match for larger countries' products.

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Jay Richard Kennedy

(Continued from Page 4)

the long-haired gab. Motion pictures isn't an art, it's an industry." Unless that is meant as constructive criticism of how Hollywood short-changes the artist by over-delegating authority to the industrialist, it is shallow-minded sophistry. Financing, distribution, exploitation, budgeting, back lot efficiency, etc., are all the sinews of an industry—and an industry of a high and complicated order at that. *But the story, the performances the direction, the photography, the scoring, the editing—in short, the film itself, is, was, and always will be, art.*

The limitations of time do not allow for detailed proof of what I am about to say, but I submit that no film has ever been made, either here or abroad, that was truly great, or even moderately so, which failed to use plot as the foundation upon which to achieve characterization. Perhaps in discussion this can be examined with regard to such films as *The Informer*, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, *Carnival In Flanders*, *Henry V*, *Open City*, and *Brief Encounter*. Now, obviously, the film, like any other art form, should concern itself primarily with people—that is—with characterization. *But the method for doing this is different in the film technique than it is in other art forms.* The paradox is that when a film is truly great, the audience, after seeing it, frequently has the impression that it *was* so because so-called "pure characterization" was achieved. The fact is, however, that the power of that characterization was made possible by a meticulous regard for the brick by brick construction of the dynamics of plot.

TO be sure, because of the bluntness with which the film medium attacks the spectator's senses, there is a constant danger of bad taste, of blatancy and of shallowness. The need for subtletizing relationships, the need for ingenuity, is greater than in any other art form. Plot, in a good motion picture is the result of an artist's careful selection of specific environment and an equally careful

specific introduction of his characters to this environment. The dramatic effect is the product of the explosion when these two forces meet. In a motion picture, this is an externalized explosion. We are not permitted to guess its effect. We *see* it.

FOR these reasons, I believe that the major failing of Hollywood's critics concerning the subject under discussion today, lies in their demand that Hollywood abandon its concern with plot in order to achieve characterization. By sheer experience, the Hollywood film maker *senses* that abandoning the plot destroys the foundations which yield characterization. Plot in a motion picture is not needed for its own sweet sake. It is needed so that characterization may be disclosed through action—a unique requirement of the motion picture art form. This is the central point. Unfortunately, the result of line production has been that all too many Hollywood film makers give maximum attention to clever plots and original plot gimmicks and do so without regard for the fact that plot is needed primarily so that it allow for the full disclosure of character. The result is they are then compelled to distort human behavior so that their characters conform to the unrealistic requirements of their ingenious and "commercial" plots. The demand that must be placed on Hollywood, I believe, is not *less* plot action, but for true plot action, materialized through equally *true* production values. True plot action would eject plot gimmicks, which were contrived for their own sake, or for the sake of some ersatz star performance. True plot action would allow for the flowering of true characterization and would open the path for *many* characterizations in a film, rather than one or two which are themselves more often than not, false.

When one bears in mind that the film reaches the largest number of people of any art form, a more balanced approach can be taken to the relative merits and demerits of the *foreign* film. It is not realistic to appraise foreign films by their effect on

the, as yet, limited and generally sophisticated audiences which have seen them. One must anticipate the effect these films would have on audiences as large as those now enjoyed by Hollywood's product. Except in the rare cases of the really great foreign films, they err as frequently as does Hollywood, but in the opposite direction. Their error comes from an indifference to plot, which ironically enough results in an audience indifference to the consequent weakening of characterization. Even the best of foreign films reflect the tradition of underestimating plot, as the best of Hollywood films reflect the opposite tradition of *overestimating* plot. It is interesting that when a foreign film attempts to correct its tendency, without fully grasping its source, or when a Hollywood film attempts in the same fashion to correct the opposite tendency, they frequently wind up with the error characteristic of the other side.

The French film, *The Raven*, in an effort to preserve a plot notion concerning a mentally diseased individual who causes anxiety, chaos and suicide by sending poison pen letters under the signature, *The Raven*, forces all the characters, with the exception of two, to comply to the rigid requirements of the plot gimmick. The two exceptions, the nymphomaniacal crippled girl and the brain surgeon are proof that the author *could* conceive characters maturely and authentically. The other cardboard cartoon characters are proof that the exercise of brute force on characterization to achieve its submission to plot, can end in disaster in Paris as well as in Hollywood.

THERE are many Hollywood examples of the reverse result when a director and/or writer attempt to free themselves from line production "Gimmick" fetishism by loosening up plot to the point where the foundation is made of sand instead of brick. Frequently such films achieve mature and unusual characterizations which do not, however, save the film from becoming tedious and slow moving. Ultimately, the very characterizations

themselves, for which this plot loosening was undertaken, sag for want of the deeds through which character clearly reveals itself in a motion picture. Despite perception of character motivation on the part of the creators, the characters become tiresome and even downright irritating. At this point, cynics "hail" the film as "done in the foreign style" and smirkingly point to the meager grosses as evidence that mass audiences "are not ready" for "art" films.

SUCCESSES and failures alike, made in Hollywood and in other countries, give ample evidence that an art form such as motion pictures, requires, that what a man or woman *is*, be disclosed through what he or she *does*. Another aspect of this requirement imposed by action is something we take for granted, though we should not. Unlike the play, which has mandatory intermissions, and the novel, which has voluntary ones at the election of the reader, the film has none. Hence, the film, frequently longer than a play, and covering as much emotional and factual ground as a novel is taken in one single lose. The action dynamics of film make this possible as well as necessary. But with these action dynamics comes the ability of the audience to keep every aspect of the story in mind throughout the two hours. That in turn imposes the demand for absolute cohesion for economic and single-purposed continuity of story. The effort at subtlety and indirection must fulfill itself within these rigid requirements. This problem exists not only in terms of the picture as a whole and all of its characters but finally it exists in each and every scene in each and every gesture and line of dialogue.

It is difficult, in one discussion to detail the manner in which plot is the foundation for characterization and why one can be no stronger than the other. Perhaps proving this connection in small pieces is the most one can hope to accomplish in this limited time. Three examples come to mind. *The Informer*, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, *Monsieur Verdoux*.

In *The Informer*, Gyppo, in his

desperate poverty and slow-wittedness, turns informer and betrays his closest friend for a cash reward which he hopes will give him a chance at a cleaner, better life. The Judas money in his pocket and whiskey in his head, he starts carousing. Giddy and gay, he turns up at the wake of his buddy, now dead as a result of his betrayal. In the anguished silence of the room, Gyppo drops his coins and they clatter on the hardwood floor. The bereaved mother and all of the visitors turn and stare as Gyppo, kneeling on all fours, starts to pick up the blood money. The coffin of his buddy remains visible in the background. Having accumulated the coins, Gyppo, on an impulse, hands them to his dead buddy's mother and with all the agony inside him, he blurts out: "I am sorry for your troubles, Mrs. MacLagherty." One line of dialogue in over 150 feet of film! Later, as he squanders the reward, and with it, his unrealizable dream, his brief moment of returning self-esteem rests upon his physical strength, his unspent brute power which lay dormant through unemployment and ignorance.

His untapped physical force, is the central dramatic element of character. To disclose this, the director surrounds McLaglen with medium sized and short people and with great subtlety builds a sign jutting out over a store window on the street. A long shot captures Gyppo, whiskey bottle in hand, approaching. Before he reaches this sign, many people have walked under it, with a good 12 inches to spare between their heads and the sign. When Gyppo approaches the sign, his head crashes through it, causing the sign to whirl on its axis and this single piece of action, plus a sense of composition in size contrasts, is all that is required to bring this sequence to its height with *one* word of dialogue! McLaglen pauses, hurls a man into the street, hurls the whiskey bottle through the window, beats himself on the chest with both hands and shouts his lost identity: "Gyp-po!"

IN *The Best Years of Our Lives*, Dana Andrews, the war hero, fighter-plane pilot, wanders in his dis-

illusionment with postwar life, into a junk heap. Drunk and bitter, he stumbles into a scrapped plane and sits at its wheel. With the aid of music, the character is called upon to recapture all of the self-respect, sense of social usefulness and joy that were his when he guided his plane as part of the military campaign for human freedom. The scene ends with Andrews in a cold sweat, suddenly sober, suddenly realizing that he cannot abandon his high wartime hopes with so little postwar struggle. In a novel, such a set-up would be trash. In film it is art.

NOW let us take *Monsieur Verdoux*. I am not interested in debates concerning Chaplin the citizen, Chaplin, the man. It would take a great deal of blind partisanship to deny that Chaplin, the artist, is the only active film maker in Hollywood today who grew up through the early one and two reelers, learned the hidden secret of motion in motion pictures, brought to it a rare knowledge of music, choreography, pantomime, poetry, playwriting and narrative, and mastered the synthesis as no one else has done. The dramatic problem of the opening of *Monsieur Verdoux*, is that of demonstrating that a brow-beaten bank clerk, incredibly naive, and seeking security for his invalid wife and family, loses his job and then comes to the macabre conclusion that the Success Story of Big Business is that it is perfectly moral and sound to murder others in order to achieve security for your intimate loved ones.

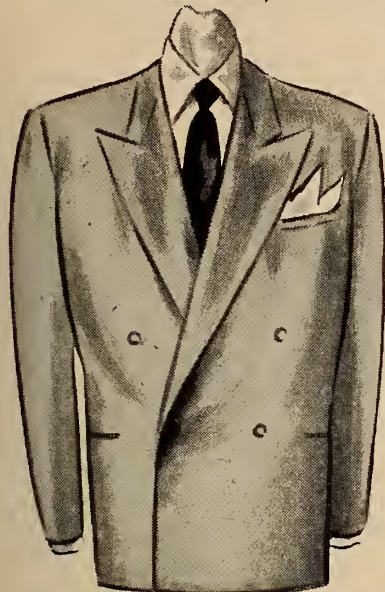
At heart, this bank clerk is not a murderer. He is repelled by violence. He is simply following, by his distorted and befuddled lights, the success story, but all this time he remains the naive bank clerk and this limitation is his ultimate undoing. To communicate this dichotomy between a man's character and the task he has undertaken, would, in a novel, require no less than 70 pages, tracing his environment and his inner dynamics. A screenplay writer, less gifted than Chaplin, and with less mastery of the fact that on film, *characterization is disclosed through action*, would have required no less

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than a reel and a half of film to make this point. Chaplin does it in 200 feet! The camera dollies up to the tombstone of the late Monsieur Verdoux, with a few remarks on the sound track concerning the circumstances under which he lost his job, murdered women, was captured and then beheaded. Then the camera pans over graveyard mist and with the aid of the narrator, dissolves to that time when Verdoux was still alive. We see thick, black smoke pouring out of a chimney, while Monsieur Verdoux is packing up what remains of a woman's clothes. Two neighbors stare at the smoke and one remarks, "Don't know what they've put in that furnace. It's been burning for two days now." Then Monsieur Verdoux walks into his study, takes out a huge pile of bills—money left by the lady he murdered—and with incredible precision of motion and with an attitude of work-a-day activity, Monsieur Verdoux, always the bank clerk, swiftly and expertly counts the bills. The audience bursts into laughter, for

they suddenly sense the whole story of the contradiction between the man, his environment, his inner dynamics, and the fantastic profession he is now embarked upon.

At the end of the film, Mr. Chaplin wishes us to understand that befuddled and psychopathic as this bank clerk may be, he is the victim of insuperable obstacles and he is, withal, a human being about to face a guillotine which waits to impose razor-edged justice. There is no time for philosophical speeches, nor in the logic of the story is it possible for other characters to reveal sympathetic reactions to Monsieur Verdoux. In 20 feet of film, Chaplin does this job through action. The warden offers the condemned man a cigarette and a drink. Monsieur Verdoux accepts the cigarette, rejects the drink. Then he asks what the drink is and upon learning that it is rum, remarks, "I never tasted rum before. Yes, thank you, I will have it." Now he takes the rum, brings the glass to his lips and in order to

drink, brings his head far back so that the audience is face to face with the full, white, live pulsating anatomy of his throat. Suddenly, your emotions tell you that in a moment the pipes which allow the rum to go from his lips into his body, to give it warmth, are about to be severed forever by a coldly impersonal and powerfully devastating knife.

THESE approaches of the masters of film making are evidence in local sections of film of what is true of the film as a whole—that which I have been attempting to establish in this paper. *Motion*, which, when made *specific* in terms of the entire picture means plot and story line, and *Deeds*, which in terms of local esquences were indicated in the examples just cited and are all part of plot action—are the foundation upon which characterization is achieved in the film art. Plot and characterization are not in conflict with one another. They are two parts of the same thing in an art form called the motion picture.

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(Continued from Page 11)

probably qualify as deductible traveling expenses. (Coburn v. Commissioner 138 F.2d 763.)

Entertainment Expenses. Entertainment expenses, reasonably connected with the writer's profession, are deductible. The necessity for entertaining is more apparent in the motion picture and theatrical field than in the average business, and the Tax Court has found that the practice of regular and widespread entertaining in the theatrical business is customary. Entertainment may take the form of inviting people who might be helpful in a business way to dinners, night clubs, golf clubs, boating parties, etc. The cost of flowers, concert and theatre tickets, cost of admission to football and other games, and the cost of parties at home and elsewhere, including amounts paid to caterers, musicians, singers and entertainers, may all be deducted as entertainment expenses if the expenditures are made in connection with the writer's business. A writer's expenditures for entertainment are clearly allowable if the purpose of the entertainment is to enhance his reputation and to lay the groundwork for future writing engagements. Generally, expenses in connection with the entertainment of newspaper men, playwrights, dramatic critics, backers of plays or pictures, actors and actresses, agents, producers etc., would meet the requirements for deductibility. In the determination of whether an expense is necessary the meaning of "appropriate" and "helpful" may be attributed to the word necessary. (Blackmer v. Comm. 70F. (2d) 255.)

Writers should make a definite effort to keep records to substantiate entertainment and other expenses. The ultimate allowance by the Bureau of Internal Revenue will be greater when a writer keeps records and proof than in a case that depends merely on an estimate.

Automobile Expenses. If a writer uses an automobile in connection with his profession he may deduct the expense of maintaining the automobile and he may also deduct a reasonable

allowance for depreciation. Consideration should be given to the cost of gasoline, oil, grease, repairs, insurance, garage or parking lot rental, road and bridge tolls, tires, garage service, chauffeur's salary, etc.

Cost of car operation in connection with going from home to office and return to home represents a personal expense and is not deductible. If the car is used only partially for business then only the proportion of the expenses that are applicable to the use of the car for business may be deducted. For instance, if the car is used 60% for business and 40% for personal purposes then only 60% of the automobile expenses may be claimed.

Depreciation is generally computed on the basis of 25% per annum. If the cost of a car is \$3,000 then the deduction for each year's depreciation would be 25% of \$3,000 or \$750. If the car is used entirely for business, then the entire amount of \$750 would be deductible each year until the car has been fully depreciated. If the car is used only partially for business then only a portion of the \$750 could be claimed on the basis of the percentage of time the car was used for business purposes.

Advertising and Publicity Expenses. Advertising and publicity expenses and expenditures for press clippings are recognized as essential in the writing profession, and are deductible.

Club Dues and Expenses. The cost of business entertainment at a club, excluding the amount paid for club dues, is deductible. If club dues are paid exclusively and solely for business purposes they are deductible. If the membership, however, is for pleasure purposes the club dues are not deductible even though the club membership is used for business entertainment. Only in certain cases will club dues be prorated between business and pleasure. Much will depend on whether there was a strong business motive in joining the club.

Union and Guild Dues and Assessments. Union and Guild dues paid by writers are deductible, and in certain cases assessments levied by the union or guild are likewise deductible.

On this point attention is directed

to Income Tax decision No. 2888, promulgated in 1935, which states in part, as follows:

"Certain monthly dues and assessments paid by members of a labor union are deductible. . . . Assessments for benefit payments to unemployed members to the extent applied to "out-of-work" benefit payments, are deductible, but such assessments are non-deductible to the extent used for sick, accident, or death benefits." The Income Tax decision then quotes the following from *Welch v. Helvering* (290 U.S.111) relative to the meaning of ordinary and necessary expenses:

"A lawsuit affecting the safety of a business may happen once in a lifetime. The counsel fees may be so heavy that repetition is unlikely. None the less, the expense is an ordinary one because we know from experience that payments for such a purpose, whether the amount is large or small, are common and accepted means of defense against attack. . . . The situation is unique in the life of the individual affected, but not in the life of the group, the community, of which it is a part."

The aforementioned Income Tax Decision No. 2888 then goes on to say "that the deductibility of contributions or payments to an organization of business associates depends upon the relation of the purpose or use of such funds to the business of the contributor thereto, irrespective of whether such contributions are called contributions, dues or assessments, is evident. . . . The nature of the association does not control . . . the monthly dues and . . . the assessments are deductible as business expenses, if such dues and assessments are used to meet the expenses of strictly labor union activities."

Legal and Accounting Expenses. Legal and accounting fees paid by a writer in connection with his professional work are deductible as business expenses. Amounts paid in connection with litigation in a tax case are deductible and so are fees paid in connection with the preparation of tax returns.

The law permits the deduction for

expenses if incurred in connection with a trade or business, and even if the expenses are not connected with a trade or business they may be deducted as non-business expenses if the expenses have been paid for the production of income or for the management, conservation or maintenance of property held for the production of such income.

The United States Tax Court has held that any litigation which seeks to increase the production of income, or to protect the right to income produced, being produced, or to be produced, or to prevent others from acquiring a right, title or interest therein would relate closely to the "production or collection of income." (*Bartholomew v. Comm.* 4TC 349.)

THE thing to remember in connection with legal, accounting or any other expenses is that they must be "ordinary and necessary" in order to qualify as deductions. If an expense is appropriate and helpful in the development of the taxpayer's business or profession, it will generally be classified as necessary. The judgment of the taxpayer will be questioned only rarely, since it is usually assumed that the expense would not have been incurred unless required by the needs of the taxpayer's business. An "ordinary" expense does not require it to be habitual or normal. Even if an expense is unique and the necessity for the expense occurs but once in the experience of a particular taxpayer, it may still be considered ordinary on the ground that it is usual in the life of the group or community of which the taxpayer is a part.

The comments concerning the deductibility of legal fees made herein under the heading of "Union and Guild Dues and Assessments" likewise apply to the discussion under the caption "Legal and Accounting Expenses."

Depreciation and Repairs. Depreciation may be deducted each year on office furniture, machines and equipment including phonograph, radios and television sets used in the taxpayer's business. A portion of the cost of each of the aforesaid assets is

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written off or deducted each year as "depreciation" on the basis of the life of the asset. For example, if a desk is acquired at a cost of \$100, the amount of \$10 would be considered a reasonable allowable deduction each year for ten years under the category of depreciation.

Expenses in connection with the repair or upkeep of furniture, machines and equipment used in the taxpayer's business are fully deductible.

Operating Net Loss Deduction.

It is quite conceivable that a writer, especially during these trying days, may experience a loss in his business or profession. A writer may have little or no income during a given year and his business expenses may be large enough to create a business

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loss. Generally speaking, if this business loss is not offset by non-business income, it may, to the extent it has not been offset by non-business income, be carried back to the second preceding year and may be claimed as a deduction in that year as a "net operating loss deduction." Any unused portion of said loss may be used in the first preceding year. If the net operating loss deduction is in excess of the net income for the two preceding taxable years, then the unused portion of the loss may be carried forward to the two succeeding taxable years.

If an individual in the writing business is unfortunate enough to have a \$10,000 loss in his business in the year 1948, with no offsetting non-business income, he will have the opportunity to claim the deduction for the years 1946 or 1947 or for both of these years, depending on the circumstances, and he may file claim for refund of all or part of prior taxes paid. In connection with operating loss carry-backs the law provides that a taxpayer who has filed a return showing such a loss may request, on the appropriate form, a tentative carry-back adjustment. Under ordinary circumstances, if such a request is made the Collector of Internal Revenue is required to make the refund of the prior years' taxes within ninety days from the day of filing the aforementioned form. This relief

was afforded to taxpayers in order to aid taxpayers who have had business reverses and who, as a result thereof, find themselves low in the required cash resources for the successful and continued operation of their businesses.

Miscellaneous Deductions — General Comments. An article of this character cannot possibly cover each and every type of business deduction but it is believed that sufficient material has already been offered to enable a taxpayer to determine reasonably whether an item truly represents a business deduction. There will, of course, always be doubtful items and that is why courts are called upon to decide the point.

This discussion has been practically limited to business deductions. Something has also been said concerning the deductibility of non-business expenses where these expenses have been in connection with the production of income or the management, conservation or maintenance of property held for the production of such income.

There are certain other statutory deductions which a taxpayer may claim, whether related to business, or the production of income or not. The principal items in this group are contributions, interest, real estate and certain other taxes, losses from fire, storm, shipwreck, or other casualty, or theft, and excessive medical and dental expenses. The rules concerning

these items have not been covered in this article, but it is believed that the average taxpayer is fairly familiar with the basic concept governing most of these items.

The principles outlined herein are equally applicable to members of other professions, including, but not limited to, producers, directors, actors, music composers and agents.

Congress has recently enacted tax legislation which includes many tax reduction provisions. Do not dissipate the savings granted you by Uncle Sam. You can do just that by failing to deduct each and every item you are entitled to. A tax return is an important document, and before you can do justice to Uncle Sam and to yourself, you should know your business deductions.

SCREEN WRITERS, TOO?

The circumstance which gives authors an advantage above all these great masters, is this, that they can multiply their originals; or rather, can make copies of their works, to what number they please, which shall be as valuable as the originals themselves.

—Addison, *The Spectator*. No. 166

The author who speaks about his own books is almost as bad as the mother who talks about her children.

—Benjamin Disraeli

Bert Granet

(Continued from Page 13)

track line was formerly two in 1946. Since then the Russians have removed the rails and only the ties are now visible.

Whatever we have seen in Frankfurt was duplicated on a hundredfold scale in Berlin. Berlin was the more impressive of the two cities since the teutonic architecture in devastation made its ruins for more dramatic. The cast and crew were billeted in a section called Zehlendorf, about 15 miles from the heart of Berlin, right near the U. S. Occupation forces headquarters. These were the late Herman Goering's barracks, built at great expense, for the Reich Air Forces.

The exasperating problem of securing permission to photograph the various sectors was again case number one on the agenda. Our biggest difficulty was getting a permit into the Russian sector. This was most essential since all the historical monuments and National Socialist landmarks are located in the heart of this sector. The Russians seemed unapproachable, even though the four occupying powers had agreed to the free transmission of news and photography in all sectors. They had found the joker in the pact, "Anything but military installations could

be photographed." The Russians managed to use this excuse quite frequently by simply stating that everything we wanted to photograph was a military installation. Their method was even simpler, every place a Russian soldier was billeted suddenly became a military installation. Such installations could be frequently identified by a pair of khaki socks hanging from a window.

THE Berlin Press Club, made up of American correspondents, took a kindly interest in our plight. They brought our case before the what now seems disbanded weekly quadriparty meeting. Here, after much protest from the Russians, we were granted permission to take our troupe into their sector. We photographed the Reich Chancellory, The Adlon Hotel, the Brandenburg Gate and other portions of the sector that were particularly dramatic. We were frequently followed, in Berlin, by an attractive girl. Speculation was rife that she was a spy. Unfortunately, to this day there can be no positive assurance that our Mata Hari was anything but a movie fan. The only other difficulty we ever had with the Russians was when we drove our camera truck in from Helmstaadt. Our French driver and an M.P. had gone off on a side road that had a "Berlin" road marker. Several shots

were fired by some young Russian soldiers. However, we considered this our own fault because of not having proper knowledge of the restriction on certain highways.

The scale of ruins in Berlin are comparable to those of Rome or Greece. It is hard to believe that this gargantuan spectacle was created by man and not the result of some earthly upheaval. Conservative estimates state that it will take about twenty-five years to remove the rubble alone. The Russians are proceeding with the destruction of the National Socialist landmarks, before they can become martyred shrines to the Germans. The Hitler bunker has been detonated, marble from the Reich Chancellory was being shipped back to Russia for statues.

RUSSIAN associations with the American, British and French have lessened considerably in the course of the past year. During 1946 it was not unusual to hold conversations with Russian officers or soldiers who congregated at the various monuments. Now while we were photographing the picture in late 1947 Russians would approach interestedly, quickly turn on their heels the moment they found we were Americans. There is no longer any communication existing between the two bodies. Considerable help was given to our project by

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Eric Pommer, former UFA head, once RKO producer, who is now back in the position of motion picture supervisor for the American government control of German movie-makers. He is assisted by Carl Winston, another former Hollywoodite.

The current success of the documentary is the surest sign of the American movie audience's intellectual growth. I believe it is the transitional step showing the desire for a more adult fare in screen entertainment. Until now it has mainly confined itself to melodrama, perhaps in a short time someone will find it is the ideal method to tell a human comedy. At any rate, experiencing the growing pains has been very pleasant.

★ ★ ★

Can You Sell a Title?

MORRIS E. COHN

THE California District Court of Appeal says something that reads like twenty thousand words of Yes. Since this is news in the courts, though old stuff in the motion picture industry, the decision is worth the attention of all writers. Here is the substance of it:

Stanley Johnston, author of the non-fiction book *Queen of the Flat Tops*, negotiated a deal with Twentieth Century-Fox for the sale of the title of his work for \$20,000. The deal was documented by intra-studio memoranda, but a boggle arose over the form of the written agreement, and it was never signed. Twentieth then said, No deal. Johnston sued for the \$20,000, got judgment in his favor in the Superior Court; now, on appeal, the District Court has also decided in favor of Johnston. This decision has become final and the judgment has been paid.

The case is of interest because it deals with the author's right in titles and his right to "sell"* the title apart from the work.

* Actually to license the use of the title for motion pictures.

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Titles as such are not protected by statutory copyright; and it is extremely doubtful whether the originator of a title "owned" it at common law. All of this the decision in the *Flat Top* case recognizes. Of course, titles acquire a value by reason of association with a work which has been publicized, and by reason of the identification of the work with the title. (This is the doctrine of "secondary meaning" in the law.)

In the *Flat Top* case, over 170,000 copies of the book had been sold at the time of the Twentieth Century deal for the title. But the interesting thing is that while the secondary meaning doctrine derives value in the title by reason of its being identified with the work, in the Johnston deal the \$20,000 depended on separating the title from the work.

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The District Court of Appeal in a carefully considered opinion by Judge Vallee, relied largely on the practice of the motion picture industry in dealing in titles and putting a value on them. It may be taken for granted that if the industry itself treats titles as being of substantial value, the industry is right and the theoreticians, if opposed, are wrong. The court was conscious of the fact that its opinion was a new departure, but one by which the law merely sought to catch up with the market place. The court is to be commended on a realistic decision coupled with sufficient flexibility in the opinion to enable the law to deal with new problems concerning titles as they may arise.

Meanwhile, writers may find they have a new, salable commodity.

Dwight Taylor

(Continued from Page 8)

ing finger like a school teacher, "no Liquor." Perry promised, with a sheepish grin, and we broke up for the day.

MY phone rang about 2 in the morning. It was Art. It seems that Perry had got liquored up and had gotten into a fight in some joint down on Main Street. They had found the studio casting slip in his pocket with Art's name on it, and contacted him instead of calling the cops. When somebody gets in trouble they like to contact picture people first—plenty of "shine." Art told me to get my clothes on and hurry down with \$50 in cash. I couldn't quite figure the angle. Art isn't exactly the kind of guy you would expect to lose any sleep over a broken-down "has-been" like Perry—especially when he had crossed him up. As I rode downtown in the cab all I could figure was that Lola Meredith must be alive somewhere, and Art hoped she would hear about it and figure he wasn't such a bad guy after all. He was always playing the hero in his own little, private theatre and believe me, brother, it was a twenty-four hour grind house! You know how they are.

Well, when I arrived at the joint there was Art sitting outside in his Dusenbergs and camel-hair coat listening to Hank, the Night Watchman on the radio. He told me to go inside and get Perry out and we'd take him home. He didn't want to be seen going into such a place because of his reputation, but on account of the fact that I haven't got any I'm supposed to dive for dimes in an open sewer if that emergency should ever arise.

Inside I found the bartender and a couple of B girls, and Perry laid out on a table like a cold mackerel. It seems he'd started boasting about old times and some guy with a bad liver had poked him one in the schnozzle. An actor can be terribly irritating, especially if you want to talk about yourself. One of the B girls was weeping about nothing in particular, and the other was singing, *Over the*

Rainbow into an old-fashioned. I slipped the bartender the fifty to keep quiet about who he was and all, and then picked up Perry over my shoulder like I used to do with my old man.

Art was still sitting in the car like a wooden Indian. The only signs of life was smoke from his Havana Perfecto. I dumped America's Sweetheart in the back seat, and then climbed in front with Art. As we started off down Main Street he got an idea.

"If we take him home now," he said, "he'll just start drinking again when he comes to, and we can say 'good-by' to all that stuff we shot today. It'll never match up with what we're shooting tomorrow. We've got to see that he doesn't get a chance to drink in the morning."

"I'll stay with him," I said; "I'll shove him in a cold shower and have him out there bright and early."

"What are we—a couple of nursemaids?" he said. "Besides, I'm going to need you at seven o'clock to handle those extras. I don't want to take a chance on your being late. I've still got that jail set on Stage 5—we'll dump him in one of the cells, and there he'll be, all safe and sound in the morning."

"He might get cold," I said.

"Say listen," says Art, (who fancies himself as a scientist, amongst other things), "a drunk never gets cold. The alcohol keeps him warm. That's why they put it in the radiators of cars to keep them from freezing."

I saw it was no use in pointing out that a human being was not a car or that would have made him mad and he might have fired me. He had the bit in his mouth again and there was no stopping him.

"It'll teach him a lesson," he said; "throw a scare into him. When he wakes up the poor guy will think he's in the can!" He started to laugh, the way he always did when he thought of a joke—the same kind of laugh he had about putting the lions in Sol Bamberger's office. To me he was as funny as a crutch. But what could I do? Even the rents in Glendale have to be paid.

Well, we stopped off at the studio

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and drove through the gate and up the long, deserted street to Stage 5. Perry was still out in the back seat. Between us we carried him onto the set and into one of the cells. They were only phonies, of course, with fly walls at the back for camera angles, so we carried him in through the back and dumped him on the cot. There were a few, moth-eaten grey blankets on the bed so I covered him up and Art kissed him on the brow with that prop laugh of his. "I'd give a week's salary to see his face when he wakes up!" said Art. But this must have been just a figure of speech, as they say, because a moment later he says "Let's get the hell out of here and get some sleep." It was nearly 4:30 before I got home and into bed again. But I didn't sleep too well, even then. I kept seeing Perry sleeping in that cell, and the dame singing *Over the Rainbow* all mixed up together, like a static lap dissolve.

Actors are funny people. All people

are funny, but actors particularly so. You never know when you've made contact. I learned that over the years. A lot of good it does me now when I'm old and raising rabbits. If I'd known then what I know now I'd never have let Art put Perry in that cell, even if I'd lost my job for it. I remembered later how he had said "I'll vindicate your faith in me—and my public's faith in me." The fact that he didn't have any public any more didn't matter. He *thought* he had, and that's the important thing.

Art and I found him in the morning. We rolled back the big doors of Stage 5 and there he was. He'd hung himself with his belt from one of the big iron pipes in the cell. Art didn't say anything for a long time. Just stood there looking. Then he told me to call EMERGENCY and turned away. For once he didn't have a topper.

We figured later Perry must have woke up about half past four and

groped around in the dark until he decided he was in a cell, like Art said he would. Then he must have thought of the promises he had made, swearing on the scrapbook and all, and his public's faith in his come-back, and his mother in Wisconsin, and Lola and it was just too much for him alone in the dark like that. Whether he thought it was a real cell or not I really can't say. All he had to do was push on the fly wall at the back. But he thought so many things were real that were phoney, and vice versa, that I guess he just didn't know any more. You know how they are.

Footnote: Shortly after the above, Art and I parted company. When I caught the picture in Glendale with my wife there was no shot of Perry dancing with the frail, and no line about "I'm so glad to be here!" Bad taste. Besides, it might have gotten a laugh from some. But not from Lola, I guess. My wife says she really liked him quite a lot.



Edmund Hartmann

(Continued from Page 6)

the goddess they are worshipping looks the part, but everything else in her character is supplied by writers. Her words, her thoughts, her actions must be considered her own, as much as were Aphrodite's. Subconsciously, the Producer must bow to the god concept and force the writer into the Limbo of obscurity. For if the writer gets his proper credit, the god concept is destroyed and the actor becomes only a frail human being saying somebody else's words.

Many of the deities of Mount Hollywood have come to believe in

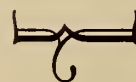
their own worshipped characters. They look down from the Mount, wearing their writer-created characters as if these were the skins they were born with. They decide, like true gods, what they will play and how they will play it; what they will wear on the screen and with whom they will wear it. And since this fabulous industry is built on the divinity of the gods of Mount Hollywood, their word has been the divine law.

Anyway you look at it, it's Apollo meets Aphrodite—Apollo gets Aphrodite.

Hero worshippers cannot give up their mythology overnight so let us face the fact even if it hurts. It is

only through study and understanding of the limitations imposed by a business-minded industry on the medium that anything excellent can be achieved. Damning others for their immature reactions is not the way to do it.

Why Apollo meets, loses and finally gets Aphrodite can be made more important than *how* he does it in this day of perceptible rebellion at the box office. A growing number of worshippers are becoming more interested in the new and modern characters presented in the Sagas. *The Farmer's Daughter*, *Gentleman's Agreement*, *Body and Soul*, and *Miracle On 34th Street* found a way to do it.



A LISTING OF SCREEN WRITERS' CREDITS
EARNED ON FEATURE PRODUCTIONS
OF CURRENT AND RECENT RELEASE

CREDITS

MARCH 1, 1948 TO MAY 1, 1948

A

FRANKLIN ADREON

Joint Original Screenplay (with Basil Dickey and Sol Shor) ADVENTURES OF FRANK AND JESSE JAMES, Rep.

ROBERT B. ALTMAN

Joint Story (with George W. George) BODYGUARD, RKO

EDNA ANHALT

Sole Screenplay THIS SIDE OF THE LAW, WB

B

EDWARD BERNDT

Sole Original Screenplay THE SHEEPISH WOLF (S) Col.

ALLEN BORETZ

Sole Screenplay MY GIRL TISA, (United States Pic.) W.B.

WILLIAM BOWERS

Joint Screenplay (with Herbert F. Margolis and Louis Morheim) LARCENY, U.I.

CHARLES BRACKETT

Joint Screenplay (with Billy Wilder and Richard L. Breen) A FOREIGN AFFAIR, Par.
Joint Screenplay (with Richard L. Breen) TATLOCK MILLIONS, Par.

GEORGE BRANDT

Sole Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS L 7-5 (S) Par.
Sole Screenplay POPULAR SCIENCE J 7-5 (S) Par.

RICHARD L. BREEN

Joint Screenplay (with Theodore Strauss and Josef Mischel) ISN'T IT ROMANTIC, Par.
Joint Screenplay (with Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder) A FOREIGN AFFAIR, Par.
Joint Screenplay (with Charles Brackett) TATLOCK MILLIONS, Par.

C

WILLIAM CHAMBERS

Novel Basis BLONDE ICE, Martin Mooney Prod.

EDWARD SHODOROV

Sole Screenplay ROAD HOUSE, Fox

HAL COLLINS

Sole Screenplay and Joint Story (with Max Wilson) DEATH ON THE DOWNBEAT, Mono.

D

SCOTT DARLING

Sole Original Screenplay DOCKS OF NEW ORLEANS, Mono.

KAREN DE WOLF

Sole Screenplay LET'S FALL IN LOVE, Col.

HELEN DEUTSCH

Sole Screenplay THE LOVES OF CARMEN, Col.

BASIL DICKEY

Joint Original Screenplay (with Franklin Adreon and Sol Shor) THE ADVENTURES OF FRANK AND JESSE JAMES, Rep.

MEL DINELLI

Sole Screenplay THE BOY CRIED MURDER, RKO

JAY DRATLER

Sole Screenplay THAT WONDERFUL URGE, Fox

E

ROBERT F. ENGEL

Sole Screenplay A FORTUNE IN TWO OLD TRUNKS (S) All-Scope Pictures.
Sole Screenplay SO THIS IS FLIGHT SERVICE (S) All-Scope Pictures.

GUY ENDORE

Joint Screenplay (with Heinz Herald) THE BURNING BUSH, U.A.

HARRY J. ESSEX

Joint Screenplay (with Fred Niblo, Jr.) BODYGUARD, RKO

HOWARD ESTABROOK

Sole Original Screenplay ALL'S WELL, Benedict Bogeaus Prod.

F

DEVERY FREEMAN

Joint Story Basis (with Everett Freeman) A KISS IN THE DARK, W.B.

EVERETT FREEMAN

Sole Screenplay LULU BELLE, Col.
Joint Story Basis (with Devery Freeman) A KISS IN THE DARK, W.B.

KETTI FRINGS

Sole Screenplay THE ACCUSED (Hal Wallis Prod.) Par.

G

KENNETH GAMET

Additional Dialogue THUNDERHOOF, Col.
Joint Screenplay (with Raymond Schrock) BLONDE ICE, Martin Mioney Productions.

GEORGE W. GEORGE

Joint Story (with Robert B. Altman) BODYGUARD, RKO

BERNARD GIRARD

Sole Original Screenplay WATERFRONT AT MIDNIGHT (Pine-Thomas) Par.

JAMES EDWART GRANT

Sole Original Screenplay THE FAR OUTPOST, Rep.

MARGARET GRUEN

Joint Story (with Oscar Saul) and Contributor* to Screenplay ROAD HOUSE, Fox

H

NORMAN S. HALL

Sole Original Screenplay LAST DAYS OF BOOTHILL, Col.

ROBERT HARARI

Adaptation A FOREIGN AFFAIR, Par.

*Academy Bulletin Only

LILLIE HAYWARD

Sole Screenplay BLOOD ON THE MOON, RKO

HEINZ HERALD

Joint Screenplay (with Guy Endore) and Joint Play Basis (with Geza Herczeg) THE BURNING BUSH, U.A.

DAVID HERTZ

*Contributor to Screenplay ROADHOUSE, Fox

GEZA HERCZEG

Joint Play Basis (with Heinz Herald) THE BURNING BUSH, U.A.

JOHN C. HIGGINS

Sole Screenplay THE CHECKERED COAT, Belsam Prod.

DOANE R. HOAG

Sole Original Screenplay BEYOND OUR OWN, Apex Film Corp.

EDWARD HUEBSCH

Sole Screenplay BEST MAN WINS, Col.

CYRIL HUME

Joint Screenplay (with Richard Maibaum) THE GREAT GATSBY, Par.

DICK IRVING HYLAND

Adaptation BLONDE ICE, Martin Mooney Productions

J

AGNES CHRISTINE JOHNSTON

Joint Screenplay (with George Wallace Sayre) STAGE STRUCK, Mono.

K

KARL KAMB

Additional Dialogue LULU BELLE, Col.

LAWRENCE KIMBLE

Sole Screenplay DRUMS ALONG THE AMAZON, Rep.

HARRY KURNITZ

Sole Screenplay A KISS IN THE DARK, W.B.

L

DAVID LANG

Sole Original Screenplay SMART MONEY, W.B.

ERNA LAZARUS

Sole Screenplay MICHAEL O'HALLORAN, (Windsor Pictures) Allied Artists

WILLIAM R. LIPMAN

Joint Story (with Frederick Stephani) THAT WONDERFUL URGE, Fox

M

RICHARD MAIBAUM

Joint Screenplay (with Cyril Hume) THE GREAT GATSBY, Par.

HERBERT MARGOLIS

Joint Screenplay (with Louis Morheim and William Bowers) LARCENY, U.I.

*Academy Bulletin Only

In this listing of screen credits, published monthly in THE SCREEN WRITER, the following abbreviations are used: COL—Columbia Pictures Corporation; E-L—Eagle-Lion Studios; FOX—20th Century-Fox Film Corporation; GOLDWYN—Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.; MGM—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios; MONO—Monogram Pictures Corporation; PAR—Paramount Pictures, Inc.; PRC—Producers Releasing Corporation of America; REP—Republic Productions, Inc.; RKO—RKO Radio Studios, Inc.; ROACH—Hal E. Roach Studio, Inc.; UA—United Artists Corporation; UNI-INT'L—Universal-International Pictures; UWP—United World Pictures; WB—Warner Brothers Studios. (S) designates screen short.

LEWIS MELTZER
Sole Screenplay TEXAS, BROOKLYN AND HEAVEN, Golden Productions

RONALD MILLAR
Joint Screenplay (with Leonard Spigelgass) SO EVIL MY LOVE, Par. (British)

JOSEF MISCHEL
Joint Screenplay (with Theodore Strauss and Richard L. Breen) ISN'T IT ROMANTIC, Par.

LOUIS MORHEIM
Joint Screenplay (with Herbert F. Margolis and William Bowers) LARCENY, U.I.

N

SLOAN NIBLEY
Sole Original Screenplay NIGHT TIME IN NEVADA, Rep.

FRED NIBLO, JR.
Joint Screenplay with Burk Symon) BORN TO FIGHT, Eagle Lion
Joint Screenplay (with Harry Essex) BODY-GUARD, RKO

R

MILTON RAISON
Joint Original Screenplay (with Maxwell Shane) MR. RECKLESS (Pine-Thomas) Par.

TOM REED
Sole Screenplay THE WRANGLER, Col.

ELIZABETH REINHARDT
Adaptation BURLESQUE, Fox

GORDON RIGBY
Sole Story STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO, Rep.

TIM RYAN
Joint Original Screenplay with Edmond Seward) SMUGGLER'S COVE, Mono.

S

RICHARD SALE
Sole Original Screenplay LADY AT MIDNIGHT. (John Sutherland Prod.) Eagle-Lion

OSCAR SAUL
Joint Story (with Margaret Gruen and Contributor* to Screenplay ROAD HOUSE, Fox

GEORGE WALLACE SAYRE
Sole Story and Joint Screenplay with Agnes Christine Johnston) STAGE STRUCK, Mono.

GERALD SCHNITZER
*Contributor to Screenplay TEXAS, BROOKLYN AND HEAVEN, Golden Productions

RAYMOND SCHROCK
Joint Screenplay (with Kenneth Gamet) BLONDE ICE, Martin Mooney Productions

MANNY SEFF
Joint Story (with Paul Yawitz) WEEP NO MORE, RKO

MAXWELL SHANE
Sole Original Screenplay SHAGGY (Pine-Thomas), Par.
Joint Original Screenplay (with Milton Raison) MR. RECKLESS (Pine-Thomas) Par.

BARRY SHIPMAN
Sole Original Screenplay SONG OF IDAHO, Col.

SOL SHOR
Joint Original Screenplay with Franklin Adreon and Basil Dickey) ADVENTURES OF FRANK AND JESSE JAMES, Rep.

CHARLES SHOWS
Joint Original Screenplay (with Bill Scott) TAIN'T SO, (S) Par.

*Academy Bulletin Only

HAROLD SHUMATE
Joint Adaptation (with Luke Short) BLOOD ON THE MOON, RKO

HAROLD SMITH
Sole Original Screenplay THUNDERHOOF, Col.

LEONARD SPIGELGASS
Joint Screenplay (with Ronald Millar) SO EVIL MY LOVE, Par. (British)

THEODORE STRAUSS
Joint Screenplay with Josef Mischel and Richard L. Breen) ISN'T IT ROMANTIC, Par.

FRANCIS SWANN
Sole Screenplay and Joint Story (with Ray McCarey) THE GAY INTRUDERS, Frank Seltzer Productions, Inc.

T

LAMAR TROTTI
Sole Screenplay BURLESQUE, Fox

W

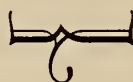
BILLY WILDER
Joint Screenplay (with Charles Brackett and Richard L. Breen) A FOREIGN AFFAIR, Par.

ROBERT C. WILLIAMS
Sole Original Screenplay MARSHAL OF AMARILLO, Rep.

MAX WILSON
Joint Story (with Hal Collins) DEATH ON THE DOWNBEAT, Mono.

Y

PAUL YAWITZ
Joint Story (with Manny Seff) WEEP NO MORE, RKO



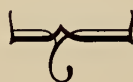
We Must Help Our Own

The Motion Picture Relief Fund Silver Jubilee is every SWG member's opportunity to renew present pledges and obtain new ones because complete, industry-wide support of the Fund is of vital importance. For the year 1947, there was a deficit of \$120,020.11.

As the industry grows, so the Fund's responsibilities increase. With current income from payroll deductions far from meeting needs, this situation can be overcome only if every eligible donor subscribes now.

Many new workers in all categories who have become active in the production of motion pictures have failed to sign payroll deduction cards. Your help is asked in lining up these non-subscribers. Only through organized and fully cooperative effort will it be possible to help the greatest number in the greatest need.

If you are not a subscriber to the Motion Picture Relief Fund, please contact the SWG office for a pledge card. Your deductions will not start till July 5th.



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The Screen Writer

EVERETT FREEMAN
Hollywood and THE NEW YORKER

COLLIER YOUNG
In Defense of Story Experts

ARTHUR L. MAYER
An Exhibitor Looks at Hollywood

GUY MORGAN
If Newspapers Did It

MORRIS E. COHN
The Other Side of the Worm

MARTIN FIELD
Type Casting Screen Writers

SAMUEL FULLER
Write 'Em and Reap

FRANK HURSLEY
An Evaluation of THE SCREEN WRITER



Gunn Shots

By JAMES GUNN

IN case there is anyone who doesn't know (My God, there must be someone!), the Breen-Hays-Johnston Office can on occasion drive writers into nervous breakdowns. And the real problems are seldom the big, fat, really juicy censorable stuff — incest, rape, and arson in bed are items that a writer can feel quite happy suffering with, and quite justified in buying a Buick when he develops a new story line to circumvent them. It's the niggling little amenities that make a man sweat, curse, and wonder if the rules were made by anyone who had contact with urban life.

Let's take drinking (goody). According to the fixed law of the Production Code, a man can get blind drunk and murder his wife, and all is hotsty-totsy. But if they sit down for a quiet snort before dinner, meanwhile discussing the progress of the plot, all hell will break loose. Sure as shooting, back will come a letter from The Office, frowning on the emphasis on drinking. Since all the hysteria comes from reading the script, not from the finished picture, changes must be made in the type. Old hands think nothing of this, dipping into their trusty Hays Office File, pre-war vintage. This consists of lines pat and unchangeable, which will get a writer out of almost any of the ordinary situations.

For instance:

For "Would you like a drink?" substitute "Here," whereupon the honeysuckle in the female lead hands a glass to the gentleman opposite her on the marquee, thus saving the morals of the nation.

Ordering a drink is far more complicated, unless the character is an alcoholic and destined to suffer for it. (Alcoholics can order anything without the slightest protest, unless, of course, they give the concoction a sales talk.) "Martini," "Manhattan,"

(Continued on Page 30)

The Screen Writer

Vol. 4, No. 1

JUNE-JULY, 1948

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SWG Takes Court Action Charging Blacklist Conspiracy

A Digest of the Formal Complaint Filed by the Guild and 30 American Writers Against Motion Picture Trade Groups and Producers

ASSERTING that the policy adopted by the Association of Motion Picture Producers to discharge studio employees for alleged but unproven subversive and un-American activities constitutes a conspiracy to blacklist writers for their private opinions and friendships, the Screen Writers' Guild has joined with thirty outstanding American authors to seek relief through the courts from a practice that threatens the validity of all writer contracts and endangers the freedom of the screen by putting it at the mercy of intolerant prejudiced groups who intimidate with unfavorable publicity.

A formal complaint against three motion picture trade associations, seven film corporations and Eric Johnston, as president of two of the associations, was filed on June 1st in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. The plaintiffs are represented by Thurman Arnold, former United States Attorney General and member of the law firm of Arnold, Fortas & Porter, Washington, D.C., and James T. Bredin, of Monahan, Goldberg & Bredin, New York City.

The defendants have been granted an extension to reply until July 22nd. They are represented by former

Supreme Court Justice Samuel Rosenman of New York City.

Needless misunderstanding and wilful distortion of fact by individuals hostile to the Guild have confused for many members and the public at large the vital issues and purposes contained in the Guild's participation in this civil action.

An intelligent reading of the complaint, prepared by Thurman Arnold, will, it is hoped, immediately clarify the course of action to which the SWG membership committed itself.

It will be seen at once that this action in no way supports or favors Communism and that it is not concerned with any principle of Communism or Communist thinking. On the contrary, it illustrates the fine democratic process under which writers are privileged to petition an American court for relief from what they believe to be unfair practices adopted by employers or corporations engaged in purchasing literary properties.

It is held in certain hostile quarters that this action is a defense of those Guild members who were cited in contempt of Congress for refusing to reply to certain questions put to them by the Thomas Committee on Un-American Activities in October, 1947. Such a contention is misrepresentation of fact and untrue. The

law suit makes no plea for Alvah Bessie, Lester Cole, Ring Lardner, Jr., John Howard Lawson, Albert Maltz, Samuel Ornitz, Adrian Scott or Dalton Trumbo.

THE sole purpose of this legal action is to safeguard the *constitutional and contractual* rights of ALL writers employed in the motion picture industry or who may sell material to it. The principle behind the move was stated by Thurman Arnold in a letter to the Guild when he wrote:

"They (the motion picture corporations) thought no doubt that they were acting in the interests of their stockholders and that they would make more money and have less trouble if they eliminated the nonconformists who were having difficulties with the Thomas Committee. But whatever the motive, the motion picture producers have surrendered the independence of a great public medium of expression. *The motion picture industry is not theirs to surrender.* Every artist, every writer, on the free exercise of whose talents the future of the industry depends, must resist this abject capitulation.

"Unless the precedent established by the motion picture industry is set aside, there is real danger that not

only the motion picture industry but every avenue and form of expression will soon be subjected to the control of the Committee on Un-American Activities. *If America is to remain free, all people including writers and artists must be free to speak and the people must be free to listen and to accept and reject the ideas expressed. Only those who have no faith in democracy and even less confidence in the American people will accept any other way of life.*"

The court is asked in the complaint to enjoin the motion picture associations and corporations from blacklisting any writer on the basis of his economic or political ideas or because of his social associations, or to discriminate against a writer's literary creation because of theme or the type of characters portrayed. Failing this objective, it petitions the court to discover the process by which the defendants judge an employee guilty of subversive, un-American actions.

THURMAN ARNOLD'S published complaint runs to 58 pages. Space limitations do not permit its printing in full in these columns, but a copy of it is available to all members at the Guild office.

To give a summary of the complaint: it opens by stating that cause for action arises under the Anti-Trust Laws of the United States, and more particularly is brought under certain sections of the Sherman Act, the Clayton Act, the Civil Rights Law and other relevant laws of New York and California.

It then states:

"This is an action to enjoin a *combination and conspiracy* of substantially all the motion picture producers of America and their trade associations. The combination has formulated a code which purports to govern the political views and associations of persons engaged in the production of motion pictures. That code impairs and threatens to destroy the free market for original and creative work and thus irreparably damages and threatens to damage the plaintiffs who are employed as writers and who also produce and sell such work for

production on the screen.

"It infringes and endangers their civil liberties by *setting up vague and indefinite standards of social and political affiliation, which are to be enforced by concerted action of all defendants.* It establishes for the motion picture industry the un-American principle of *guilt by association.* The judgments of this combination are carried out by the combined action of its members *sitting as a quasi-court* which threatens to deny to any offending writer an opportunity to write for the screen."

The plaintiffs are then named — the Screen Writers' Guild, Inc., and thirty individuals, twenty of whom are screen writers and members of the SWG Board of Directors, and ten being members of the Council of the Authors' League of America.

THE interest of the Guild as a plaintiff, the complaint states, is that of an organization created to represent its members in collective bargaining, to correct abuses to which its members may be subjected, and to protect the rights and property of members as set forth in Article II of its Constitution and By-Laws.

"In addition, in its own right, the Guild is vitally concerned with improving and conserving the quality and integrity of the creative work produced for the American screen and in securing and maintaining a free market for all original ideas and literary work in that field. The intangible value referred to in ordinary business enterprise as "good will" in the case of the Guild consists of its continuous record as a source for, and an encouragement of, creative literary work.

"The reputation and standing of the Guild, its ability to maintain itself as a going concern, and its capacity to attract new members depends to a large degree upon the quality of the literary product of its members. All restrictions on freedom of artistic expression threaten the good will of the Guild as a going concern. This interest of the Guild is separate and apart from the interests of its individual members. Accordingly, *the Guild*

sues, both to protect its own reputation as an organization of creative workers and a source of original work and the lawfully designated representative of its members whose interests it is under duty to safeguard."

The interests of the individual plaintiffs, outstanding American screen writers, playwrights, novelists and short story writers, are then presented after each man is identified by his credits and experience in literature and the entertainment field. The thirty writer-plaintiffs are:

Sheridan Gibney

President of SWG

Robert Ardrey

Art Arthur

Claude Binyon

Charles Brackett

Frank Cavett

Valentine Davies

Richard English

Everett Freeman

Paul Gangelin

Albert Hackett

F. Hugh Herbert

Milton Krims

Arthur Kober

Ernest Pascal

George Seaton

Arthur Sheekman

Leonard Spigelgass

Dwight Taylor

Harry Tugend

Oscar Hammerstein, II

President of the Authors' League of America

John Hersey

Russel Crouse

Moss Hart

President of the Dramatists' Guild

Christopher La Farge

Howard Lindsay

Richard Rodgers

Rex Stout

John Vandercook

Glenway Wescott

The complaint continues: "All of the plaintiffs in this action publicly allege that *they are not now and never have been members of the Communist party.* They do not, in this proceeding, seek to raise constitutional questions as to the right of Congress to inquire as to their political affiliations.

(Continued on Page 25)

Hollywood and The New Yorker

By
EVERETT FREEMAN

AT a gathering in Manhattan some months ago, I turned to Harold Ross, editor of the *New Yorker*, and asked a question that had long been on my deferred list:

"Why," I asked, "in a magazine with so many informative and interesting departments, do you persist in retaining movie critics who so obviously hate pictures?"

Ross simply grunted his reply.

"Where," he said, "can you find a literate man who likes movies?"

Ross's response seems to sum up the *New Yorker's* attitude and disposition toward all of Hollywood and its product. It is an attitude that has been in effect from the days of the late and crotchety John Mosher right down to the magazine's incumbent film critic, John McCarten—a gentleman who rates his work as about on a par with peddling marihuana to Junior High School girls.

"Where can you find a literate man who likes movies?"

Well, it seems to me that Mr. Ross, in one sweeping statement, has managed to relegate some ninety million Americans into the category of illiterates. And this, I believe, is worthy of discussion.

One might conceivably ask: Why, in view of this attitude, does the *New Yorker* persist in conducting a movie department at all; why, if its policy is to deride rather than review, does it pay a man to sit and suffer?

The answer is not too obscure. The readers of the magazine (illiterates by Ross's own definition) must, in a furtive and sneaking sort of way, like motion pictures. Besides, it is just dimly possible that this haughty,

monocled, down-the-nose view of America's fourth largest industry pays off at Harold's till.

Now I do not intend this piece to be an all-out, thundering defense of Hollywood's product. God knows, I have squirmed through enough stinkers to send me screaming into the hills. But, by the same token, I have been vastly entertained by a sufficient amount of worthwhile celluloid to make any generality about the business as pompous and fatuous as a generality about any creative field. The *New Yorker's* reviews go beyond the realm of individual critiques. Over the course of years, they add up to a snide and slightly jaundiced condemnation of all of Hollywood.

LET us examine this prejudice without bias. Is Hollywood still a place where mentality is on the grammar school level? Is it a place where writers are lured at fabulous salaries and ordered to abort their talents? Is Hollywood's point of view ready for the scrap heap?

I think not.

The talent in Hollywood is pretty much of the same mould as the talent of the New York theatre, the talent of the publishing field—yes, even the talent of the *New Yorker*. To my knowledge, no producer has yet said to Robert Sherwood or George Kaufman or Moss Hart or St. Clair McKelway or Sally Benson: "What we want is something that will appeal to a twelve-year-old mind." Talent has every opportunity to flourish in Hollywood—as elsewhere.

The difficulty in any candid appraisal is, and always has been,

that most estimates of Hollywood are based on its entire product. This is as senseless as attempting to judge the whole publishing field by the Street & Smith periodicals, *Argosy All-Story Weekly* or *Cap'n Billy's Whiz-Bang*. The Hollywood mills grind out "entertainment" for all levels of taste, and any categorical estimate is obviously impossible for that reason. The *New Yorker's* book reviewer, I am sure, would not condemn Knopf, Doubleday, Dutton and Scribners for the rank and file of pot boilers that emerge—nor would its music critic denounce American music on the basis of the bleating of Tin Pan Alley.

The argument might be advanced that at least publishers *try* to elevate popular taste; that truly fine works do emerge now and then from the welter of printed rubbish.

The argument is sound, but assailable.

HOW many great books emerge in any one year? You can count them on the fingers of one hand.

The Theatre? How many great plays appear in any single year? See if you can add up to five.

Coming to the movies, how many fine films are produced over any given twelve-month period? The same infinitesimal number. Two, three, sometimes four.

In other words, great creative effort comes hard—always has and always will. But more important than that, if numbers are the criterion, Hollywood would seem to be keeping its head above water.

As regards foreign films, compari-

sons are particularly odious because there is little chance for honest comparison. What we receive in this country are the *pick* of foreign motion pictures selected from *all* nations. Actually, run-of-the-mill French, British, Italian, Russian, and Swedish movies are so murderously bad as to be unbelievable.

IS Hollywood a place where great works of art are emasculated?

This is a canard that goes back to the infant silent days of films. It has utterly no present-day basis in truth.

Now and then there are slips and failures but, by and large, when a producer decides to spend a couple of million dollars on *David Copperfield* or *Camille* or *Anna Karenina*, he wants with all his heart to be as faithful to the original work as possible—and usually is—within the limits of dramaturgy. I know of very few great books or plays that have been “ruined” in recent years by Hollywood. In the case of plays I know of many that have been improved.

Of course there are certain limitations to “faithfulness.” Hollywood operates under a self-imposed censorship. Let us examine these limitations.

On Broadway right now there are two really fine plays of hit proportions, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Mister Roberts*. Both of these will eventually be made into very fine motion pictures. It is possible that the rape scene in *Streetcar* will be intimidated rather than shown and that some of the earthy dialogue in *Mister Roberts* will be softened, but these changes will not, I am sure, detract too much from the merit of the films. The alterations will be made not through any desire on the part of producers to keep the facts of life from the public, but because the public itself, through many organizations and societies, has mandated the movies to keep the screen free of anything that might smack of salacity.

Again the reason is obvious. The bulk of motion picture attendance is made up of adolescents. No matter what forthrightness Mr. Ross may have in a magazine of limited circu-

lation toward the facts of life, the facts of movie making are such as to risk huge loss if a film is banned. I am sure that no one in his right mind would insist on complete and utter license (or liberty, if you will) on the screen. If so, I can assure all these folk that producers would leap at this with open arms—particularly the producers of low budget pictures. The freedom now enjoyed by the makers of French films would sell an awful lot of tickets in American theatres—many more tickets than are now sold by the product of our Gallic competitors.

THE emerald is a magnificent and beautiful gem, but, as any lapidary knows, no emerald is perfect. All contain flaws of varying proportions. To disregard the stone and comment on the flaws constitutes, in my opinion, the deadly sin of caviling. The *New Yorker* is guilty of this on all counts. Fine pictures (the rare few that emerge) are not praised and encouraged; they are picked apart in a carping and contemptuous manner—the bad held up to ridicule at the expense of the good. There is no work extant—and certainly no film—that cannot be shown to have faults under the too critical eye. The *New Yorker* reveals a sort of exultant childish glee in pointing up these faults.

A case in point is *The Best Years Of Our Lives* and, more recently, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*. This latter picture was conceived solely to entertain and, as far as I am concerned, succeeded admirably of its purpose. Any “message” within it was, I am sure, purely coincidental and present simply to give the film additional force. In fact, any one of two different “messages” might have been contained in the film, as John Huston readily admits.

Grudgingly, McCarten conceded that it was an interesting picture, but his faint praise lapsed into a sort of sulking defiance. The story, he said, was weak and obvious.

If, by “obvious,” McCarten was referring to his clever deduction in reel one that the trio’s lust for gold

would bring them to no good end, he is to be commended on his astuteness. He no doubt had a field day with *Anna Karenina* when he sleuthed out early in the novel that Anna’s illicit passion was not going to achieve any lasting happiness for her. And I can only guess at his triumphant glee over *An American Tragedy* when, by piecing odd clues together, he was able to reason out as early as Chapter Twelve that pushing girls from canoes gets a man nowhere with the bulls.

IN a medium as vast and diversified as motion pictures, product is turned out for all levels of taste and intelligence. It automatically follows that one man’s taste is another man’s poison. There is no denying the fact that, in the course of any given year, a great many films emerge from Hollywood that Harold Ross could not possibly consider up to his standard of intellectual diversion.

All of us seek our entertainment level and achieve whatever bliss it affords. For one individual to deride categorically what another man considers entertaining is on a par with the musical poseurs who blast at Tschaikovsky because his passionate and emotional melodies are said to be maudlin and “popular.”

The *New Yorker* would do well to spare its reviewer from the rank and file of Hollywood films. True, they are silly and childish and guilelessly inept by severe adult standards, but it is only in the notably higher echelons of articulateness that we reach the entertainment tastes of John McCarten and Harold Ross.

At this upper level, possibly only two or three films a year will prove exciting. Yet I note in *Goings On About Town*, a *New Yorker* department devoted to “events of interest,” that often as many as fifteen or twenty pictures are recommended.

Would this not seem a veritable bonanza to Mr. Ross? Would this not seem that Hollywood is competing honestly with any other art form (within the limitations I have herein-before described)?

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In Defense of Story Experts

By

COLLIER YOUNG

IN the March issue of this journal my esteemed friend, Dwight Taylor applied the strap to the studio "story experts." Now that June is here and I'm able to bear a shirt on my outraged back once more, I should like to quibble a bit with Mr. Taylor. But mind you, I raise my voice not as a "story expert," but as a fellow who's been in and around the writing business for some fifteen years and still picks up the wrong wrench from time to time in a story conference. Having myself, on occasion, fouled up the precision gear of story telling, I am far from that assured Olympian figure which Mr. Taylor claims as the chief characteristic of a "story expert." On the contrary, my ego is a bruised thing, ready for the couch. Whereas my writer friends appear healthier, happier, richer, and altogether more assured than this broken student of Baker, Gallishaw, and the International Correspondence School.

Yet enough of this self-pity. Like most amiable debates of this kind, we founder on that ugly prong of generality. Let's face it. Mr. Taylor's article does *generally* presuppose that the writer, mainly because he has hired out as such, is total master of his craft. Thus it follows that *all* "story experts" are heavy-handed louts who wander about the studio with stray pages from *The Horn Blows At Midnight* sticking between their toes.

Now we know that both these generalities are absurd. Wouldn't it be safer to assume that *some* writers are really worth their salt and that *some*

studio workers in the cosmic field of the story, serve a useful purpose in life? Don't you have a feeling that we're already getting a little closer to the truth of the matter? Well, then, let's all wash up to the elbows, slip into our white gowns, adjust our sterile masks, and step into Mr. Quiller's office.

Mr. Quiller is an executive producer who is long overdue at Sun Valley. He is tired and harrassed. Around his mouth are the tell-tale white traces of a recent stomach powder. Mr. Quiller got around to reading your script at 3.32 a.m., only seven hours ago. Your name is Laidlow and you are also nervous as a cat. The "story expert" who enters with you has no name. Like many heroic figures, he is anonymous and unsung. Mr. Quiller tells you he thinks you've done a good job. A little long, but good. Perhaps a bit flabby in the second act, but that can be fixed. You listen, gulp, and you are beginning to feel better.

The little gray "expert" lurking in the far shadow of the piano gets a nice glow on too. Why? Why should he? He didn't write it. No, he didn't. But he did keep reminding you all those ten weeks about holding the number of sets down. He did question a certain polysyllabic style of speech for the leading lady because he had been through that problem with this particular star time and time again. So with cold disdain and three Martinis at Lucey's, you made the stuff for the lady simpler. Knowing Mr. Quiller well, your story counsel had likewise urged you to avoid long dolly shots with rain effects in which the

hero and the heroine tell each other how much they both like to walk in the rain.

THIS is just another bit of special knowledge which has, at this crucial moment, made your life as a writer a lot happier than it might otherwise have been. What if you had asked the leading lady to say words she just couldn't get her high priced tongue around? What if, unthinkingly, you had written in five more sets than absolutely necessary? These errors would have again forced Mr. Quiller to cancel Sun Valley, with consequent hardship on you, Mrs. Quiller, two secretaries; indeed, on the whole life of the plant.

Where, then, has been the cancerous hand of this villain—this "story expert"? Where his corrupting touch, his leprous breath? Come all you worthy and forgotten fanciers of the shooting script! Form a ring around this poor shepherd boy who learned to spell. Upon his bemused brow place a laurel crown from the Warner Ranch. Then steal away and let him dream that long, long dream of the day he single-handedly conquered Mr. Quiller!

Now, for some close harmony, Mr. Taylor. If you go along with me in the theory that there are *some* profoundly non-creative, self-appointed, writers in Hollywood, mixed in with a *few* professional saboteurs, I then find myself in cheering accord with you on any number of counts.

Take, for one, the dull lexicon that seems to have grown up around our

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COLLIER YOUNG, former story consultant at Warner Brothers Studio, is Executive Associate to Harry Cohn at Columbia Pictures.

An Exhibitor Looks at Hollywood

This paper was read by Mr. Mayer at a recent panel discussion of screen stories held by the Department of Motion Pictures at New York University, the first department of its kind to inaugurate a four-year curriculum. Jay Richard Kennedy's excellent paper, PLOTS AND CHARACTERS, delivered by him at that time, was published as an article in the May issue of THE SCREEN WRITER. Other speakers were Professor Robert Gessner of New York University, moderator of the discussion; Olin Clark, Eastern Story Editor for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Terry Ramsaye, screen historian and Editor of THE MOTION PICTURE HERALD.

Mr. Mayer, who has appeared in these pages before, has long been well known as an independent exhibitor and importer of motion pictures. He is now active in the production of educational films.

IF I am optimistic about the future of American films, such optimism represents the triumph of faith over experience. Actually, when you recognize Hollywood's big business penchant for satisfying the lowest common denominator of its patrons by the highest degree of assembly line production, the Damoclean sword of censorship and the pistol of pressure groups pressed to the heads of studio heads, not to mention the supreme self-satisfaction and entrenched privilege of some of those heads and their satraps, the amazing thing is not the volume of inferior pictures produced each year, but the fact that there are any good ones. Even a disastrous season such as the last had its miracles like *Miracle on 34th Street*, not to mention *Gentleman's Agreement*, *Crossfire* or *Body and Soul*.

Regardless of the handicaps and booby-traps of the existing studio setup, you cannot stop the John Fords, the Wylers, the Wellmans and the Capras from making fine pictures. There are, however, currents and cross-currents flowing in the film world today which will substantially affect the conditions under which

these talented men and others, of definitely less distinction, are scheduled to function. It is quite safe to prophesy that some of these currents will materially affect the form and content of tomorrow's pictures but more specific prediction is perilous.

A few years ago I would certainly have insisted the exciting new ingredient in the picture pot was independent production. For years it had been contended that if authors, directors and stars could organize their own units and produce their own pictures without the interference of short-sighted movie moguls and equally short-sighted exhibitors, the outcome would represent substantial progress both in hits and runs over previous averages.

THE consistently high standards of independent producers like Selznick, Goldwyn and Disney seemed to justify this confidence. During the war years, actuated probably more by a desire to escape heavy taxes than a flaming consecration to truth and beauty, a large number of distinguished slaves escaped from

their high-salaried shackles and established their own companies.

Unfortunately, as of this date, the results of their labors do not indicate any substantial advance over the artistic or entertainment standards of the pictures that they produced when in bondage. Nonetheless, it may be premature to pass final judgment on the merits of independent production, and some of the waves of the future may bear it closer to its widely heralded destinations.

Probably the most powerful of these waves will be the forthcoming Supreme Court decision in the government action against the eight major picture companies. It is almost universally conceded that the government will be successful in banning such trade practices as block-booking, which means buying pictures in group rather than individually, circuit booking of films through which powerful buyers obtain preference over independent exhibitors regardless of the size or location of their theatres, fixing of admission prices by distributors, and excessive clearances by which a substantial period of time elapses between the first and the subsequent

by Arthur L. Mayer

showing of pictures. It is even possible that the defendants will be forced to divorce themselves from their theatre holdings, or at least forbidden to play the pictures of other major companies operating theatres. If this occurs, it will undoubtedly constitute an enormous incentive to independent production and exhibition.

NO one is wise enough confidently to predict how such a decision will affect picture production. The assumption that monopolistic conditions are necessarily fatal to the production of distinguished films is obviously false. The Rank set-up in England constitutes a monopoly which makes anything of that nature in this country look like a lollypopgun. Nonetheless, although I am not among those who constantly admire English pictures at the expense of American, it cannot be denied that the British monopoly is turning out some magnificent productions such as *Brief Encounter*, *Great Expectations*, *Odd Man Out*, *I Know Where I'm Going*.

A decision favoring the government will unquestionably lead to considerable confusion and chaos, but do not be deceived by the prophets of doom. It will not ruin the industry, as former Secretary of State Byrnes recently claimed, and it will very possibly inject some adrenalin into its hardened arteries.

One additional reservation should be noted. For many years block-booking has been a favorite target of block-headed reformers. They have pointed out, with some accuracy, that if to get a good picture the exhibitor has to buy a half dozen bad ones, this constitutes not only an economic injustice to the theatre proprietor, but

an encouragement to the production of bad pictures.

We must be careful, however, how we use the words "good" and "bad." When an exhibitor speaks of a good picture, he simply means one which will prove profitable. When he refers to a bad picture, he means one without B.O. — and in his parlance B.O. means box-office and nothing else. Like any other businessman seeking to survive, he is apt to be cautious and conservative. He knows from past experience that his patrons want to see Gable or Grable in glamorous romance and he also knows from past experience that they have little yen for artistic triumphs like *The Long Voyage Home*, depressing fiction like *Ox-Bow Incident*, biographical special pleading like *Woodrow Wilson* or commentaries on our economic plague spots like *The Grapes of Wrath*.

These are, however, the very films which aesthetic critics and serious minded citizens regard as the good pictures. If it had not been for block-booking they would not have been shown in half the theatres which had to play them to get Shirley Temple or Mickey Rooney. Anyone who considers this statement unduly cynical need only check back the industry records to several years ago when a per cent cancellation privilege was vouchsafed exhibitors. There were 4837 cancellations of Barrie's *Quality Street*, but only 13 of *The Last Gangster*, and 3389 of *The Great Garrick* to 20 of *Her Jungle Love*.

IF the court decision compels the producers to dispose of their theatres, they will lose their most reliable source of revenue almost simultaneously with the cream of their foreign

markets. For the success of the recent negotiations in Great Britain must not lead us to underestimate the malady that still lingers on: the world lacks the available dollars to continue to buy and pay for American pictures in anything approaching the volume it formerly did and, in spite of nationalistic agitations, still desires to do.

In addition to these financial casualties, motion picture grosses in our domestic theatres have been steadily declining from the peak of war prosperity. The situation is as yet far from critical. Business, according to *Variety*, has fallen from "sensational to merely terrific." But you need be no student of recondite charts to recognize a downward tendency of approximately 15% or to hazard the prediction that in the immediate future fewer three-million-dollar superduper epics will be projected in the studios or, as a consequence, projected on our theatre screens. Their passing does not need disturb us too deeply.

ECONOMY does not necessarily entail a cheapening of product. It can be attained through the encouragement of material specially produced for the screen in preference to the purchase at exorbitant prices of successful stage plays and best sellers which subsequently must be completely rewritten and revised. As someone once said, Hollywood buys a good story about a bad girl and makes it into a bad story about a good girl.

Adequate advance preparation can greatly speed up shooting schedules. Executive salaries could also be drastically reduced—but that, of course, is heresy and not to be seriously contemplated. If Hollywood can be persuaded to economize intelligently

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The Cooperative Bank

By

S. K. LAUREN

HAVE you got five dollars to invest? Or fifty? Or five hundred? Or a thousand?

Do you want 3½ to 5 per cent on your money rather than the 1½ per cent a bank will pay?

Do you need financing for a radio, television set, frigidaire, or car?

And would you like to borrow that money for 1 % per month *on the unpaid balance*? (The bank adds its total interest to the principal to be repaid. And have you ever tried a loan shark?)

Do you need that last thousand to finish your new house, or is it a quick two hundred cash you need to get your head above water and take a deep, grateful breath?

Would you like to take your problem to a group of men in your own craft, who have a complete understanding of your situation and prospects and who are not only ready but eager to help you?

Above all, do you want to help a fellow writer out of a tough spot? Help him in a kindly, understanding way, without humiliation, without subjecting him to usury, and without the slightest breath of charity?

The Screen Writers' Federal Credit Union is the answer to all these things.

A Credit Union is a cooperative bank run by and for the members of a craft, union, factory, department store or industrial organization. Like

a bank it is a place where its members put their money for savings and investment, and from which its members may borrow money at established rates. Unlike a bank, it has no overhead, no salaried officers, and no expense other than minor mailing charges.

OUR Credit Union is chartered and directly supervised by the Federal Government. Under its provisions we may lend up to \$300 on no security other than the borrower's signature. On secured loans we may go up to ten per cent of our capitalization. And our capitalization is entirely dependent on you, the membership. You, any member of your family, and employees of the SWG, may invest to the extent of \$1000 apiece.

As you have gathered, this is a cooperative movement. It is not intended to put banks out of business or cause Mr. Giannini any sleepless nights. Yet, for loans such as we have mentioned, at rates of interest far below the legal maximum, and yearly dividends well above savings accounts, it is good business. When you couple it with the fact that the Credit Committee which passes on all loans, and the Board of Directors which reviews all activities of the Credit Union, possess a far more profound and personal knowledge of the intricacies of a screen writer's economic setup than any bank could hope to have,

it becomes something which you, as a screen writer, cannot afford to pass up.

But don't take our word for it. Credit Unions are in successful operation all over the United States. If you want to learn, ask, as we did, members of the Fox Credit Union, or RKO or Columbia whose capitalizations run into hundreds of thousands and who pay yearly dividends. Ask the members how they finance cars, home furnishings, etc. And learn that the loss from unpaid loans of all Credit Unions in the United States is less than ½ of 1 per cent.

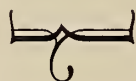
OTHER Credit Unions are successful. Can ours succeed, too? At the moment our capitalization is around \$2000. That means our top loan can be only \$200. To enable us to answer the questions we asked above, the Credit Union needs an immediate working capital of \$20,000. More than that, it needs the faith and complete participation of our membership.

The Screen Writers' Federal Credit Union has just been started.

Shares are five dollars apiece.

It takes one share—plus twenty-five cents—to become a member.

Have you got \$5, or \$50, or \$500, or \$1000 that you can invest to the profit of yourself and your fellow screen writers?



If Newspapers Did It

By

GUY MORGAN

BEFORE the war I was a film critic. A war injury to my left hand, making it impossible for me to clap, destroyed my livelihood. In the confusion immediately following the outbreak of peace I managed to slip through the enemy lines and become a screenwriter.

There were, I found, for a newspaperman several important differences in writing technique to be mastered. These may best be illustrated by retrospective analogy.

After several story conferences, I dreamed I was back in Fleet Street.

The Editor wished to see me. "Morgan," he said, "I don't know whether you read what Dilys Levieux wrote in last week's *Fleet Street Fun*—'What British newspaper readers want is adult news stories about real people.' Now I want you to write me an *adult* news story. Page One stuff, of course—sex, glamour and all that, a background of sport if possible, and a strong court case to round it off. I want a good new twist—but, remember, no spivs. I want *real* people."

There was a note of appeal in the Editor's voice as he laid his hand on my shoulder. "Go home and think about it," he said, "but, *please*, no spivs."

I went home and thought about it. The months passed pleasantly. Then my telephone rang. Is there *no* peace?

"Well, what have you got?" the Editor asked.

"It's about a man who bites a dog," I said. "In Piccadilly Circus on Boat Race Night. He came up at Marlborough Street."

The great man nodded. "And the sex angle?"

(GUY MORGAN, a member of the British Screenwriters' Association, was film critic of the London Daily Express for 5 years before the war.)

"It was a dog by a previous marriage," I said.

"Good," said the Editor, "and how about glamour?"

"The girl's father is on the National Coal Board," I said.

The Editor pressed a number of bells. "I like it," he said. "Properly handled I think it could be a circulation smash hit."

Suddenly his face clouded. "He wasn't a spiv by any chance, was he?" I shook my head.

I was given an office, a dictaphone, and a secretary, in case home life palled. Halfway through the third week two men came in and laid a Persian carpet.

Some months later I was summoned to an Editorial Conference. Copies of my news story, neatly roneoed and bound, were in every hand.

"Well, gentlemen . . .?" asked the Editor, leaning back and closing his eyes.

The City Editor pursed his lips and frowned. "The *Sunday News* printed one like it four years ago," he said. "Nobody read it. The paper folded."

"Marlborough Street's so damned unphotogenic," said the Picture Editor. "Better make it Bow Street or the Old Bailey."

"Must it be Boat Race Night?" asked the Circulation Manager. "We'd never sell a copy in Oxford."

"Why not VE-Night?" said the Features Editor. "We've got some good descriptions in the files."

"Or Mafeking Night?" suggested the Literary Editor. "I recall it well."

"No wholesaler in Mafeking," grumbled the Distribution Manager.

"Natives'd never stand for it anyway," said the Foreign Editor.

"I say, let's make it Walpurgis Night," said the Art Editor. "I adore drawing trolls."

"No wholesaler in Walpurgis," muttered the Distribution Manager.

THE Copy Taster shook his head. "Quite frankly it's the girl I'm worried about. Lacks human interest. How'd it be for a twist if she didn't know her old man was on the Coal Board, but thought he was still working down the mine? He could black his face every night before he came home from work so she'd think he was still earning an honest living."

"In Tonypandy they could live, mun," cried the Music Critic excitedly, "and her old datta doesn't know she is really Madame Patti Pritchards, the great singer, until he hears her singing Aberystwyth at the Eisteddfod, very dramatic."

"Don't know the tune" said the Editor. "Hum it to me."

The Music Critic hummed.

"Don't like it" said the Editor. "Sounds like a hymn."

"What sort of a dog was it?" asked the Country Notes Editor.

"A schippercke," I said.

"No good for a single column head," growled the Chief Sub-Editor. "better make it a peke."

"And what is wrong with a whippet, mun, tell me that?" asked the Music Critic, still sinuering.

The Chained Lawyer looked dubious. "I think we'd be safer to do without the dog altogether. The R.S.P.-C.A. might make trouble."

"How about making it a horse," suggested the Racing Correspondent hopefully, "and have it happen at Aintree on National Night?"

The Chief Composer stopped

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The Other Side of the Worm

By

MORRIS E. COHN

TWICE during the past few months a high court of this state has affirmed the verdict of a jury which required, in the one case a radio producer, and in the other a motion picture producer, to pay for literary property found to have been appropriated without the writer's consent. While at this writing the cases still have to run the gantlet of the Supreme Court of California before becoming final, this is news worth the attention of all who make a living by creating literary properties.

The opinion in the radio case tells that the writer in 1941 wrote a motion picture preview type of radio program, had it recorded, and sent it around the networks and agencies. No sale. In 1945 the defendant network broadcast a series of programs cast in the format of motion picture previews, which a jury found to be substantially similar to the writer's program. The writer sued. The theory of the suit was not plagiarism but a purchase. The writer did not charge the studio with theft. He pursued it with a polite legal fiction: the studio really intended to pay the writer the reasonable value of the work; but it had not yet done so.

A jury gave the plaintiff \$35,000. The Court of Appeal has affirmed the decision; the Supreme Court has granted a hearing of the case, which means that the decision is not yet final (and might even be reversed).

The case is of special interest to writers for several reasons. The problems of a writer pursuing a defendant on a charge of appropriation are numerous indeed. Not the least is the proof of similarity, particularly

in those cases in which the thief has been light-fingered, discriminating, and skillful at switcheroo. (*We'll put it in Sorrento and make it a boathouse instead of a gymnasium.*) In dealing with this problem the courts have invented various formulae, have cut out exceptions, and have repatched and embroidered the exceptions with glosses, conditions, and marginal annotations.¹

IN the usual case, the writer charges the defendant with plagiarism; and proof of the *appropriation* depends upon the similarity of the work. But the case under discussion was brought under a theory of purchase. The proof of similarity therefore ought to be required to meet the tests imposed in plagiarism cases. Similarity is necessary only to identify the work produced as the work which the writer submitted.

Judge Wilson, who wrote the opinion in the case, also grappled with the essentially metaphysical problem in the difference between an idea, which is not property, and the expression of that idea in a literary form, which is. This problem is particularly troublesome in radio in which the "idea" for a show is a staple commodity notwithstanding the antiquated notions of the law on this subject.

IT is a commonplace maxim that ideas cannot be protected. (This

perhaps stems from the same type of reasoning which induced Grotius to conclude that the ocean cannot be made the subject of private property because boundaries cannot be fixed.) In every field in which ideas are valued, the entertainment field no less than others, this maxim is consistently ignored, except as a defense in a law suit. Ideas are bought; people are hired on the basis of their ideas; and fortunes are made on no firmer ground. Only when one is charged with appropriation does he suddenly encounter the blinding revelation that ideas are not property. The courts often repeat this dictum, but almost as often prefer to allow the realities of the market place to prevail. Judge Wilson was not faced with deciding the fundamental question because he concluded that the writer's work, duly recorded, had passed from the state of a mere idea to that of property.

The case against the motion picture studio was based on a charge that the studio had pirated a stage play; that although script had been largely rewritten the essential characters and plot were the same. A jury agreed with the writer and brought in a verdict of \$25,000. The District Court of Appeals has affirmed the judgment.²

"An unauthorized appropriation," said Judge Vallee of the District Court, "is not to be neutralized on the plea that 'it is such a little one.'" The test is whether an average audience viewing both works would spon-

¹ See for example *Emerson v. Davies*, Fed. Cas. 4436, 8 Fed. Cas. 615, 618 and *Edwards and Deutsch Litho Co. v. Boorman*, (C.C.A. 7) 15 F 2d 35, 36 and *Barsha v. M.G.M.* c2 Cal.

² As this piece goes to press the Supreme court of California has granted a hearing, so that the last word has not yet been heard.

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Type Casting Screen Writers

By

MARTIN FIELD

THE Hollywood "film industry," like the steel, auto, meat packing or oil industries, prides itself on its efficient operation. A familiar "efficiency" is the casting of actors according to type: hero, ingenue, villain, villainess, and so on. What is less well known is that Hollywood exercises similar efficiency with regard to screen writers, who are cast according to type just like actors.

When a film producer is casting a picture, he consults the Players Directory, which lists all the professional actors, complete with photographs and motion picture credits. In this way, the producer can line up his cast pretty quickly. The categories are neat and time-saving: Women, divided into Leading Women, Ingenues, and Characters and Comediennes; Men, divided into similar categories; and Children.

There is no Writers Directory for a film producer to consult, but there is a compilation of film writing credits which can be explored in the search for a suitable screen writer. And, of course, writers' agents are always ready to give the producer a sales talk on their clients' particular abilities.

Type casting of writers can be divided into two general kinds: First, there is casting according to the content, or kind of story to be written, and second, there is casting according to the form, or structure, of the screenplay to be written. Since casting according to the content of the story is much more prevalent, let us examine this first and see how it works.

Certain writers are typed, whether they like it or not, as being good only for certain types of films, such as

Western, mystery, horror, light romance, drama, melodrama, musical, farce, sea story, comedy. A writer may be typed because the very first picture he happened to be assigned to was a mystery story. Forever after, the producers stamp him as the fellow to be assigned to mystery stories.

Another kind of casting according to content is that applied to writers who have become known for certain kinds of novels, short stories or plays. An example that comes to mind which illustrates this is that of Alan Le May. Before Mr. Le May became a screen writer he wrote such novels as *Painted Ponies*, *Gunsight Trail*, *The Smoky Years*, and *Empire For A Lady*, which are suggestive of the romantic American West of imagined memory. When Mr. Le May became a screen writer, he "naturally" was assigned to write such films as *Northwest Mounted Police*, *San Antonio*, *Cheyenne* and others.

ERNEST HAYCOX, who wrote the stories from which John Ford's *Stage Coach* and Walter Wanger's *Canyon Passage* were made, is another example of typecasting according to content, in this case the Western film. When Seymour Nebenzal decided to produce *Heaven Only Knows*, a screen original by Aubrey Wisberg which had a modern big city gangster background, Albert S. Rogell, the director of the picture, got the idea of changing the background to that of a frontier Montana town of the 1890's. Who was the writer picked to write the adaptation of the altered original story? None other than Mr. Ernest Haycox, whose name was

linked with previous successful Western films.

EXAMPLES of similar casting of writers are almost as numerous as the number of screen writers working in Hollywood. Take the case of Valentine Davies. Mr. Davies wrote a whimsical original story about a man who was convinced he was Santa Claus. The film version, *Miracle on 34th Street*, was a great success. Director-producer Frank Capra had owned Eric Knight's whimsical story about a man who could fly in the air, *The Flying Yorkshireman*, for some years. He had had no success in obtaining a satisfactory screen treatment. Convinced that Mr. Davies could give to "The Flying Yorkshireman" the same sort of successful "touch" of whimsey that distinguished *Miracle on 34th Street*, Mr. Capra hired Mr. Davies to work on "Yorkshireman."

In its pursuit of type casting of writers, Hollywood can reach far over the world. Any writer of reputation never knows when he may get the summons to fly to Hollywood to work on an assignment. Millen Brand is a case in point. Mr. Brand wrote his successful novel, *The Outward Room*, some years ago. Sidney Kingsley adapted it into play form and it was produced as *The World We Make*. (Mr. Kingsley didn't use the original title because he was afraid the play-going public might confuse it with *Outward Bound*.) Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer bought the film rights to Mr. Brand's and Mr. Kingsley's work and that, apparently, was the end of it. Well, it *was* the end of *The Outward*

Room, which still languishes unproduced at Metro.

But then, last year, a novel by Mary Jane Ward called *The Snake Pit* was published and became a best seller. Twentieth Century-Fox purchased the film rights to that novel. *The Outward Room* was about a girl who had been in an insane asylum. *The Snake Pit* was about a girl who had been in an insane asylum. Who was the logical man for Twentieth Century-Fox to hire to adapt *The Snake Pit* to the screen? Why, Mr. Kingsley, of course, or Mr. Brand. Mr. Kingsley being busy at another studio, M-G-M, Mr. Brand was yanked out of his Pennsylvania farm and shipped out to Hollywood.

Obviously, Mr. Brand is an example of smart type casting on the part of Hollywood. Another such example is that of Albert Maltz, which proves that the minds of the Hollywood producers who cast writers do not always move in obvious grooves. Last year Mr. Maltz was assigned to write the screenplay of *The Robe*, a novel of Christ's time. At first sight, this seemed definitely not to be the casting of a writer to type since Mr. Maltz had been distinguished for pretty grim and realistic modern screenplays like *This Gun For Hire*, *Destination Tokyo* and *Pride of the Marines*. Further examination of Mr. Maltz's qualities as a writer, however, bear out the idea that his assignment to *The Robe* was not out of his writing character, so to speak. In both *Destination Tokyo* and *Pride of the Marines*, war films though they were, in certain scenes Mr. Maltz displayed high spiritual and humanistic qualities; there was a concern with man, an idealism, that is seldom evinced on the screen. These qualities of depth of perception of human values were vitally necessary in the screenplay of a film of faith like *The Robe*. The selection of Mr. Maltz as the screen writer by the producer of *The Robe* was not, then, the departure from accustomed casting that it seemed to be at first sight.

These, then, have been cases of type casting which seem to be perfectly all right. A certain kind of story has

been assigned to a writer who has already been successful with that same kind of story. You may well ask, Isn't that a wise thing for a producer to do? The writer who has made a specialty of a certain field of literary endeavor knows more about it and can bring more authenticity to it. In many cases, like those previously cited, that is true.

BUT in the majority of cases, while at first thought it may seem sound practice to assign a picture of a certain type to a writer who has had extensive experience with that kind of picture, further thought uncovers a major flaw in such a premise. There is the possibility, and in too many cases the actuality, that frequent casting of writers in this manner produces a great many clichés and stereotypes in the script, and, inevitably, in the finished film itself.

For instance, the man who writes one musical comedy after another is bound, after a while, to be putting the same devices into every one of his scripts. And in the case of the writer who constantly turns out mysteries, usually the same kind of sleuth is on the trail of the same kind of criminal. There is no freshening of character, dialogue, or situation, and too many films seem like caricatures of what once were original, vigorous entertainments.

An example of how worthwhile writing contributions to the screen can be held back because of type casting writers is that of Preston Sturges. For quite some years Mr. Sturges had a reputation in Hollywood as a dependable screen writer who could be called on for a good job on such dramas as *Diamond Jim*, *Port of Seven Seas*, *The Power and the Glory* and *If I were King*. However, much as Mr. Sturges wanted to write the kind of satiric comedy for which he felt best suited, he was not given his opportunity until he acquired the additional authority of a director and wrote and directed *The Great McGinty*.

So much for casting of writers according to the kind of story, or content. Now we come to the other

general kind of type casting to which writers are subject, and that is the form, or structure, of a story. Before a story reaches the screen, it goes from original story form (if it isn't a novel or play), to treatment or adaptation, to screenplay (which can be divided almost endlessly into First Finished Screenplay, Polished Screenplay, Third Finished Screenplay, and, perhaps finally, Final Shooting Script).

Regarding the original story, there are some writers who have developed reputations for turning out good original stories written directly for the screen. Herbert Clyde Lewis, for one, has in four years in Hollywood, established a fine reputation for writing original stories and has sold eight screen originals. However, Mr. Lewis, talented as he is, finds it difficult to obtain a screenplay credit on any of his own original stories. Like other screen original "specialists," he finds himself handicapped by his very reputation from getting assignments to write screenplays. Apparently the producer mind finds it difficult to believe that a man who can write a good original screen story can also write a good finished screenplay. That this line of thinking seems to be in direct contradiction of the logic that brings a Millen Brand to Hollywood is a bit of non sequitur in which the film capital seems to specialize.

ANOTHER, and smaller, classification of type casting is that of "adaptor." When a novel or play is bought by a movie company, it must first be adapted before its screenplay can be written. Certain writers have acquired reputations as being excellent for this type of work. They are ingenious about consolidating several minor characters into one character for more effective screen purposes, or deleting scenes or characters which might be objectionable to religious, racial, moral, or professional groups. (The part of a lawyer, for instance, who does something unethical is resented, naturally, by the legal profession. Quite recently an association of women lawyers protested vigorously the

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Write 'Em and Reap

By

SAMUEL FULLER

IT was a hot day, too hot for Martin to enjoy his cigar. Actually, it was a weed. He remembered how he used to buy those Cabanas and sighed, climbed the steps and rang the bell. He shifted his valise to his right hand and pushed his white cap back. He still had a few hairs.

The butler who opened the door had none. He was dressed like a butler. He did not even look at Martin, but simply said: "Mr. Paine's bedbugs will see you now."

Martin, the Exterminator Man, stared at the butler. "Say, aren't you Joe Cobb?"

The butler opened his eyes. "I beg your pardon, but did you—well, I'll be goddamed! Martin. Dan Martin! Well I'll be goddamed!"

Both men were embarrassed. Cobb's color died first and his pudgy cheeks went back to their natural corpse-white. Martin was still red-faced when he followed the butler into the kitchen. Cobb poured a couple of drinks. He gave Martin a glass, took the other one and they clinked glasses and drank the liquor. Cobb refilled the glasses. This time they both waited. Cobb was waiting for Martin to start talking about it, and, of course, Martin was waiting for Cobb to bring up the subject.

Martin broke the silence. "How long's it been, Joe?"

Joe Cobb downed his drink and counted on his fingers.

"Twenty-four . . . no, twenty-five years."

"No, it couldn't be. Lessee—last time I saw you was when you grabbed the Oscar. What *was* the name of that dog?"

"I won *two* Oscars, Dan. Remember?"

"The last one."

Joe Cobb the butler sighed, unwilling to recollect, but cornered. "*Rickrack*."

"Yeah, that's it. That's when all of us were going crazy with those one-word titles. *Rickrack*. Yeah. . . . That *couldn't* be twenty-five years ago."

Cobb counted on his fingers again as Martin poured the drink for him. "Yup — *Rickrack* was released in forty-eight."

Martin shook his head "Yeah, guess it was. Can you beat that—twenty-five years ago!" He shook his head again and poured the whiskey down his throat. "I better take the next one with ice. It's too hot. How'd you wind up butlering?"

Cobb shrugged his shoulders. "How'd you wind up a bedbug exterminator? Tragic, hm?"

Martin grunted and watched Cobb make him a tall one with ice. "Yeah. . . . I can't figure it out. What the hell happened to us?"

"You should ask. Who always took the floor at those Guild meetings and shouted down the AAA? Me? It wasn't me. It was Dan Martin of Beverly Hills. Where *do* you live now?"

"Remember that duplex I used to own on the side and rent out? Well, when I had to sell it I made myself a deal. I could stay there in the downstairs quarters. I got my shop there, too."

"You really have an exterminating shop?" asked Cobb.

Martin pointed to his valise. "That's the equipment. Shop? What

kind of a shop could I have? I get a call to round up bedbugs and I grab my bag and I'm in business. It's no job for a guy with my talent but for a guy with my talent it's the only job I can handle—I mean outside job."

"You're still writing, Dan?"

"*Gomine çì comme ça*. You know how it is. Once in a while I get an idea and I start playing around with it—but I get a bedbug call and I can never get right down to—"

"I know, I know. I've been toying with a few originals too, but my boss keeps me hopping around."

"Nice guy?"

"Uh-huh."

"What's his name?"

JOE COBB the butler poured more whiskey into Martin's glass and waited until the bedbug exterminator was drinking when he said:

"Bill Paine."

Martin choked on his drink. "*Bill Paine*—you mean that—"

Cobb nodded. "Yeah, the same Bill Paine."

Martin slammed his glass down on the table. "That did it! Bill Paine. He owns this shack?"

Cobb held up four fingers. "Four shacks—just like this. And a joint in Bar Harbor, a layout on the beach, and a cozy little fifteen-room retreat in Capri—all paid for."

"Bill Paine!" cried Martin, fighting back tears of envy coupled with injustice.

Cobb nodded. "The same green kid that came to the studio. Junior writer

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An Evaluation of The Screen Writer

With this issue, Volume 4, Number 1, The Screen Writer celebrates its third birthday. And we are fortunate to be able to present an evaluation of the last thirty-six issues by a distinguished critic. An outsider looking in — looking at us as we reveal ourselves in the points of view we hold toward our profession — Frank Hursley discusses the vital function and purpose of the Guild's magazine.

Literary critic and associate professor of English in the University of Wisconsin until 1943, Mr. Hursley has, since then, been successfully engaged in writing radio plays in collaboration with Doris Hursley. They are represented in "The Best One Act Plays of 1945." Mr. Hursley's article is the comment of a man with a sound academic background combined with practical entertainment experience outside the motion picture industry.

THE best antidote I know to seeing too many movies is to read *The Screen Writer*. And the best corrective to the casual impression one may have formed of the nature and purposes of screen writers is to encounter them again on the pages of *The Screen Writer*.

Of course, as a plain, or Gallup-poll, consumer of the movies, I have not been too aware of just who, if anybody, did write the movies I have seen. Unfortunately, I am not too conscientious about reading small print on the screen or elsewhere, and anyway the brief flash announcing that the screen play had been done by some fellow or fellows I had never heard of, always seemed to come just at the moment I was opening my popcorn box. By the time I had the popcorn well under control and the film was fading into the view of the sun rising over the towers of Manhattan, the author of the piece had become a dim figure indeed. So far as I could judge, in the hierarchy that brought forth the picture, he had a little precedence over the enviable fellow who provided Miss Turner's nightgowns.

The picture itself, excepting, of course, the memorable few, had no

stamp of authorship. There was no revelation of insight into the turbulent waters of human behavior, no flashes of understanding of reality, no suggestion of awareness, no doubt, no lyricism rising above the level of a greeting card, no wit—in short, no encountering of a mind that challenged, or disturbed, or inspired, or even impressed. There was lots of other stuff, of course: quaint if predictable characters, muscular heroes, costumes, formula dilemmas, formula complications, pat solutions, twists, twisteroos, gags, cute dialogue, and, perennially, titillating passionless sex—the whole literary Sears Roebuck catalogue. But nobody ever asked who wrote the Sears Roebuck catalogue.

THEN, something over a year ago, I picked up a copy of *The Screen Writer* on a newsstand. What I expected was something like *The Writer's Digest*. I read the lead article (it was William Wyler's "No Magic Wand," treating of his experience with *The Best Years of Our Lives*), grabbed a checkbook, filled out a subscription blank, and ordered all the back copies. May I say parenthetically

everybody who has ever seen a movie should do the same thing.

The Screen Writer is probably the most consistent and successful attempt in literary history by a group of professional writers to evaluate their medium. I make this statement advisedly and having in mind a long and distinguished succession of journals of literary criticism, from the *Grub-Street Journal* to *T.L.S.* and from the *Dial* to the *Saturday Review of Literature*.

What distinguishes *The Screen Writer* is that it is written by the practitioners of a craft and directed to the attention and scrutiny of the other practitioners of the craft. Most literary criticism, of course, has been written by professional critics and directed to the attention of the literate public. It would be absurd to attempt to characterize literary criticism in a glib sentence, but much of it has dealt with general, if basic, problems and rather little of it with the immediate problems of the working craftsman. Literary criticism has probably influenced literature more by affecting the taste of readers than it has directly by shaping the practice of writers.

The impact of *The Screen Writer*,

by Frank Hursley

on the contrary, is specifically upon the functioning writer. In that respect, *The Screen Writer* is like any professional journal. The fact that it is written by screen writers for screen writers is in itself a pretty good guarantee that it make sense. In the thirty-six numbers which I have read, I cannot recall a single piece which was not an intelligent expression of an intelligent and honest point of view—and this in a field which is practically a provocation to drivel. Many of the articles were ardent. You had the feeling that the typewriter had hardly cooled off from some particularly irritating job before the wielder of the instrument was pounding it again to ask why such things should be and to hell with it. But always, whether in anger or in detached analysis, in despair over the movies as they are or excited with what they might be, or in the plain recording of factual experience, he had to make sense. The doctor writing in the medical journal had better steer clear of hoke.

THE job *The Screen Writer* is doing is a job that badly needs to be done. That job, as I see it, is to explore critically every circumstance that impinges on the problem of how better screen plays can be written. It is familiar matter that the moving picture is still something new, that its potentiality has not been realized, that as an art form it has not been given definition and delineation in the way that, for example, the novel or the stage play has. Furthermore, its development as an artistic product is inhibited or accelerated, in

any event controlled, by a complex of technical and financial consideration such as have plagued no other form of art. One of the most valuable services being performed, and it seems to me brilliantly and realistically, by *The Screen Writer* is the exploration of the milieu of the screen play.

Certainly among the most valuable articles that have appeared in *The Screen Writer* are those in which the writers—and I may say they do a zestful job of it—lay bare the economic structure of the movie industry. Nobody knows better than the screen writer that the economics and aesthetics of moviedom are never very far apart.

On this point, and it's obviously an important one, I judge from *The Screen Writer* that screen writers have no objection to the movies making money. In fact, they would even like them to make more money, but they, apparently, have some differences with the front office over how that can best be done. It seems to be the conviction of the latter that, since nineteen-year-olds attend the movies in the greatest numbers, the movies should be designed to attract nineteen-year-olds. The screen writers, very realistically I believe, point out the greatest potential audience for the movies is the mass of adults who seldom, or never, attend the movies and that this audience can be attracted only by more adult pictures. This is the only direction in which the movies can advance either artistically or financially. The most hopeful thing I know about the movies is that the screen writers are all for going after adults with adult pictures.

How to create adult pictures and do it effectively poses another prob-

lem. Certainly a terrific amount of debris from the unsavory past of the movies has to be sent to the incinerator. That all hands are eager to join in this ceremony is indicated by the vigorous, and hilarious, onslaught upon clichés in the movies launched by Roland Kibbee's "Stop Me If You Wrote This Before," and quickly followed by I.A.L. Diamond's "Darling! You Mean . . .?", and Ken Englund's "Quick! Boil Some Hot Clichés." (You should be a radio writer after reading these three pieces. Kibbee and company leave you nothing to write about and no known way of writing it.)

BUT it isn't enough merely to clean house and get rid of the gimcracks and gewgaws left over from the days of the stereopticon. The house itself has to be remodeled. The thoughtful series of articles by Sheridan Gibney, to mention only one contribution to the architecture of the adult screenplay, would seem to be very sound building. "The screen writer must present a continuous action, sustained through many scenes to a final climax—at which point the picture ends. In this respect the 'form' is closer to the Shakesperian drama than to the modern three-act play. The writer is presenting a series of tiny little scenes designed to have a cumulative effect.—It might be said that he (the screen writer) is writing a long one-act play in two or three hundred scenes."

The most insistent demand, voiced time and time again in *The Screen Writer* and implicit in practically every article, is that the production of

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E D I T O R I A L

THE blacklist is the poison gas of industrial warfare, a weapon long since repudiated between employers and employees, but, in a curious throw-back to the 1890's, revived by the Motion Picture Association against writers whom it considers undesirable.

Thurman Arnold, in behalf of the Guild, has challenged the use, through corporation conspiracy, of this dangerous, corrupting device, which can spread its venom to the damage of the entire community of writers.

Among other things, it is hoped that this suit will eventually compel a form of "Hague Convention," outlawing once and for all this despicable tactic by which groups of companies suspend individual judgment and enforce a collective ban upon any current object of their organized wrath.

The action of the producers is comparable to Lynch law — punishment-through-panic inflicted upon victims found guilty without due process of law and executed on the spot, with only hearsay evidence to justify the corpse swinging overhead. We have here an example of economic Lynch law.

True, civil damage suits may in time provide partial recompense to the victims for the malodorous method used against them. But that doesn't excuse those who lined up with the mob instead of with the sheriff. Nor is there any excuse to be found where courts after the event confirm the mob's verdict. And the magic word, "Innocent" has no power to resurrect those already embalmed in printer's ink and interred in the filth of editorial misrepresentation.

The blacklist — both open and tacit — and the Kangaroo Court method of trial are perhaps the two deepest causes for short-term concern among Guild members. Both are major targets in the Thurman Arnold complaint.

Nor can arbitrary cancellation of clear-cut contracts by distorted interpretation of the morality clause be allowed to go uncontested in an industry where so much is based upon contractual agreement.

Over and above the other targets are the long-term considerations affecting the writer in all his creative efforts: The stifling effect that the mere existence of these threats can have upon honest writing and free expression.

Possibly limitations must be imposed now and then upon the right of free expression — in print, on a screen or wherever that expression may be sought. No one, for instance, would argue that the right of free expression means that the laws of libel have no place upon the books.

But in this nation freedom of speech is a basic Constitutional guarantee. Any restriction of that freedom (aimed particularly at those whose very profession depends upon its exercise) must be weighed with exacting care and yardsticked with meticulous concern for the priceless freedom it may jeopardize.

Few would place in that "exacting care" category any restriction of the right of free expression developed in a raucous ricochet from the Thomas Committee to the M.P.A. via Hearstian headlines.

This too is one of the major aspects brought under fire in the Arnold complaint.

Discoloring any cool appraisal of these key issues is the unfortunate fact that they have been precipitated by a clash involving Communism.

All whose names appear as plaintiffs fully realize that one result of a successful suit may be some indirect benefit for those in the industry accused of holding Communist sympathies, and that the whole intent is liable to distortion by irresponsible elements in the press. ("Thirty Writers Sue Film Producers to Lift Red Ban"; "Injunction Sought to Block No-Commie Hiring Policy"; "Thirty Writers Sue to Prevent Studios Barring Red Authors.")

These are headlines we can expect, instead of the honest and accurate appraisal which *Variety* expressed in its headline: "Guild Sues Major Companies to Kayo 'Blacklisting'."

That's it in a nutshell — we are fighting not for Communism but against blacklisting.

The point is that even the most anti-Communist among us refuses to concede that America is so resourceless in its fight against Communism that to defend itself it must fall back upon Lynch law, blacklisting, and risking the rights of all of us to free expression.

Need for such methods reflects on the cravenness of the Motion Picture Association, on their little faith in the legal institutions of our country, but those of us who have in the past conducted successful political combat against Communists scorn the craven conception that we can defeat them only by resorting to tactics as despicable as their own.

The lawsuit against the producers to end the blacklist is *the most important action writers have had to take* in the United States. Either all of us are free to write as we believe or none of us is free. It is easy, dispirited thinking for some to say, "I don't write controversial material so I could never be affected."

Only through vigorous support of an undisputed principle as a group can writers be strong, and the principle involved in this issue — freedom of thought for ALL writers — is hardly debatable by any American writer.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Arthur L. Mayer

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rather than in a panic, it can turn out more sincere and more sensitive pictures in the next few years than it has in the last few. The history of French and Italian pictures proves this. Shoestring production keeps a producer's ears close to the ground.

NOT only will pictures have to be cheaper; but with the decline in long runs as business tapers off, there will have to be more of them. Mr. Samuel Goldwyn thinks that this will prove highly harmful, but I am not sure that he is correct. Producers, authors, directors and performers assigned to low budget pictures have customarily regarded such jobs as a hopeless attempt to imitate past major successes with a minimum of funds, interest or effort. But under the leadership of men like Dore Schary at R.K.O. and Louis de Rochemont in his new affiliation with M.G.M. this need not be true of most of the B pictures of the future any more than it was true of a few B's of the past—B's like Leo McCarey's *Make Way For Tomorrow*, Garson Kanin's *A Man To Remember*, Val Lewton's *Curse of the Cat People*, or only recently Elia Kazan's *Boomerang*.

General Electric and Standard Oil know that the millions they spend in their research laboratories are not wasted. By the same token, the low budget picture of the future can serve as an inexpensive, occasionally possibly profitable, medium for picture experimentation with new subjects and new locales, with new talents and new faces, some of which will eventually become the best loved faces in the world.

And such new faces and new talents are urgently needed. We are attending the swan-song of the great stars of yesterday. Hope, Crosby, Cooper, Gable, are all men in the forties, and I am too much of a gentleman to say how old most of their female counterparts are. There are those who think they will never be replaced and that the emphasis of the future will be on story rather than

star value. That theory seems to me to run counter to a basic American craving for heroes. My own pet subject for speculation is whether the coming favorites will be tough hombres like Spencer Tracy, or skinny crooners like Sinatra; gracious, cultured ladies like Myrna Loy, or hot mamas like Rita Hayworth. But whatever they are they will reflect the ideals and the needs of a new generation.

Those needs will, I think, encourage a widely expanded use of the documentary technique of which we have recently seen such excellent examples in *The House on 92nd Street* and *Naked City*. Thus far, the American wedding of fiction and documentary has been confined primarily to Crime and Punishment. But two excellent new films made abroad—*Paisan* and *The Search*—show how effectively this technique can be used for broader objectives. Maybe I am prejudiced in favor of *Paisan* because my partner and myself are the happy possessors of the American rights, and maybe that same prejudice leads me to overestimate the influence that I think the importation of a large number of unusual foreign films will have on American production.

Although *Open City*, *Shoe-Shine*, *To Live In Peace* and *Children of Paradise* may achieve inconsiderable grosses compared to American standards, the effect of these films on the receptive minds of leading American picture makers will, I think, be as memorable as that of *Caligari*, the granddaddy of all our horror pictures. It was the first film I ever had anything to do with—almost 25 years ago—and exhibitors and public alike disliked it so heartily that for a time it almost ruined Sam Goldwyn, who had imported it—but Sam, like his Uncle Sam, takes a lot of ruining.

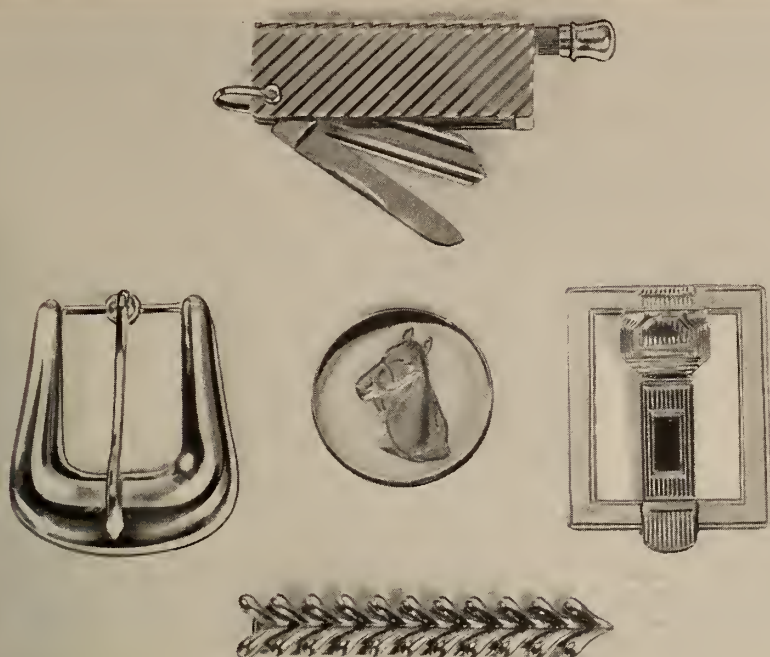
OFFSETTING some of the encouraging factors to which I have been referring, was the ill-advised conduct both of the unfriendly writers and the possibly too friendly executives before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Eric Johnston himself said, "good pictures

cannot be produced in an atmosphere of fear." Timidity on the part of its leadership, timidity which is in marked contrast to the fighting spirit demonstrated under the leadership of Wendell Willkie, serves to create such an atmosphere of fear in the rank and file of an industry. It also serves to create unwarranted suspicions in the minds of the public. As Quentin Reynolds put it, "If the hearings in Washington proved anything at all, they proved that there was about as much successful communistic influence in Hollywood as there is in General Motors." Not a single picture was pointed out as having any subversive material. Nonetheless, the industry suspension of the accused men was generally interpreted as a confession that all was not in order on the Coast.

As a result of this, pictures with social significance will probably be junked by their producers. Between the pressure of government agencies, conservative bankers and cautious exhibitors, the studios will find it hard to escape from purely escapist entertainment.

No resume of the forces which will affect American picture production in the immediate future, however brief, would be complete without some mention of television. Only four television stations in six big cities were on the air before Pearl Harbor. By the beginning of this year a total of 54 cities in 29 states were engaged in television broadcasting authorizations and applications, 65 construction permits had been granted and 45 applications were pending. Estimates for production for the current year range from 400,000 to 600,000 sets. In the New York metropolitan area alone, 90,000 sets were reported to be in operation by January 1, 1948. In other words, a vast new post-war industry has shot up over night.

If you were to ask a dozen picture experts as to television's probable effect on movie attendance you would get a dozen different replies. My own old-fashioned conviction is that competition is not only a good thing for the public, but for the competitors themselves. The fact that the Joneses



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will shortly be able to stay comfortably at home with all the convenience and economy of looking at a picture with their friends and their families in their own drawing room, will serve as a stimulating challenge to all of us who have been lolling too long in the sunshine of Palm Springs and the pad-docks of Santa Anita.

To meet this new threat we will have to develop fine new directors interpreting fine new stories written by fine new authors, played by fine new actors (*Hold everything about that word "new" and see the editorial footnote.*) and they had better be fine if we are going to continue to hear the well-loved jingle of Jones' money in the till. We exhibitors are going to have to devote less time to gin rummy and more to better projection, possibly three-dimensional, theatres with a new look including improved acoustics, sight lines, seats and service, and more convincing advertising. I believe that we are going to have these things because I am a showman at heart and every showman

is inevitably an optimist, convinced against every shred of evidence that things are going to be better tomorrow than they are today.

Far greater catastrophies threaten all of us than adverse decisions, loss of foreign markets, or the triumph of television: the dangers of world-wide atomic warfare, of a possible depression to end all depressions—above all, the threat to democratic institutions from the spread of totalitarianism—but in spite of these perils we stand today on the threshold of one of the most exciting eras in human history. I have faith that men facing these challenges will rise to higher levels of courage, insight and expression than they have ever demonstrated, and that the new heights achieved in science and industry and art will be reflected in the mass medium which is at once a science and an industry and an art—our motion pictures.

(Editorial Note) — Though *The Screen Writer* finds itself in substantial agreement with Mr. Mayer's

opinions it must challenge his ingenuous faith in the effectiveness of "new" talents and "new" faces. This is the age-old plaint of producers who have wasted, abused, and hampered the talents available to them. It is the cry of exhibitors who have fostered the star system and then stultified their own creation by misleading advertising, by exhausting the audience appeal of "names" in cynical disregard of the merits of the pictures in which the names appear. The truth is that the industry has never properly used the talents that have always been available.

It is to be noted that Mr. Mayer does not ask for "new" producers or "new" exhibitors. To judge from the general tone of his article, we may conclude that this is an oversight. We call his attention to it. Let us have creative imagination behind the all-powerful desk, give us exhibitors who will present pictures honestly on their merit, and it will be found that the established writers, directors and actors in Hollywood are equal to meeting any challenge.



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Martin Field

(Continued from Page 12)

part of a woman lawyer as played by Myrna Loy.) Or, the adaptor is skilled at telescoping the plot so that two events which take place years apart in the novel would take place the same day in the screen story and thus provide greater dramatic effect.

Sheridan Gibney's reputation as an adaptor rose enormously after he worked a year or so on the screenplay of *Anthony Adverse* and brought that massive novel within the framework of a screenplay. Mr. Gibney's services as an adaptor of novels have been in great demand ever since.

WHEN Hollywood producers are faced with the problem of adapting a hit stage comedy to the screen, such as Philip Barry's *Holiday* or *The Philadelphia Story* or Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse's *Life With Father*, the man they turn to is Donald Ogden Stewart. Never, never is Mr. Stewart thought of in connection with a serious motion picture, and so, to write a drama, Mr. Stewart must turn to the stage and create a play.

Topping the list of writers are the dialogue and script polishers. They go to work after a screen play is finished and their job is to give the dialogue and situations "touches" and "twists" which will make for a brighter, more intelligent, less hackneyed film. They are among the highest paid writers and include such authors as Erskine Caldwell and William Faulkner, who will take on a "polish job" for two or three weeks or so at several thousand dollars a week and do not care about getting credit for their work on the screen,

although in most cases their contributions are not large enough to justify screen credit anyway.

SO we see how the final screenplay takes shape, like an automobile on an assembly line in Detroit. First there is the screen original or novel or play—the raw material. Then there are the adaptors, who shape the raw material. Beyond the adaptors are still other writers who are known as good "constructionists" or "builders." Given a plot and a locale and a set of characters, they can put everything together in such sequence as to provide the greatest dramatic effect. Then come the "screenplay" writers who are expert at dialogue, who can convey character, motivation, and action through dialogue and shot sequence. Then, finally, come the "dialogue polishers" and the shiny end product rolls off the assembly line, neatly bound and labeled, "Final Shooting Script."

We have surveyed the kinds of type casting of writers and their various categories. What we now ask, is the effect of this "efficiency"? While the Hollywood producers seem content with this system of casting writers, many writers most emphatically are not happy about the situation. Just as actors frequently object to being typed, and would like the opportunity of playing roles which are different from their usual ones, so writers resent being typed. Most of them want a chance to show their versatility, instead of being straightjacketed.

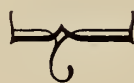
Every now and then Hollywood cries that its writers are sterile and incapable of "original" or "fresh" writing. In most cases, the people who lament the loudest about this state of affairs are the selfsame indi-

viduals who keep on typing writers in certain specialized grooves. It is rare for a writer to be given the opportunity to work on a different kind of story or do a different kind of screen writing than he has hitherto done.

The most common way for a writer to get the chance to write a "different" type of screenplay is to sell the studio an original story of a "different" type and insist as a condition of purchase that he write his own screenplay. Failing that, the writer can only resort to writing short stories, novels or plays in an effort to show his studio bosses that he is capable of a type of story unlike his previous studio efforts.

Once in a blue moon a writer of one kind of story may manage to prevail upon a producer to try him out on another kind of story and the results are, happily, very successful. However, most producers can hardly be blamed for playing it safe and refusing to take chances on writers doing different kinds of work, and therefore type casting of writers—as of actors—prevails in Hollywood.

SOME writers darkly suspect that this pattern of dividing the work on pictures among several writers may be part of a producers' plan for minimizing the individual importance of writers. The producers can only reply that motion picture production is an "industry" and type casting of writers is the most efficient way of doing things. And who are writers to criticize? After all, the famed Chicago meat packing industry can only claim that when it butchers hogs it "uses everything but the squeal." Since the advent of sound, the film industry can boast that it has been doing much better than that.



Morris E. Cohn

(Continued from Page 10)

taneously regard them as largely similar. "If such similarities exist as to justify an inference of copying of protectible material, it is necessary to prove only that a substantial part of respondents' play was copied to sustain liability on the part of appellants.*** A subsequent author cannot avoid liability by making changes in, or by omissions from, or by additions to, the original story. Unlawful appropriation cannot be excused by a showing that there was much of the original work which was not appropriated.*** If similar emotions are portrayed by a sequence of events presented in like manner, expression, and form, then infringement is apparent.*** 'Copying is not confined to a literary repetition, but includes various modes in which the matter of any publication may be adopted, imitated, or transferred with more or less colorable alteration.' A picture may be a piracy in whole or in part, irrespective of the fact that some of the similarities may logically result from identity of

locale, theme, and subject matter."

SCREENPLAYS in search of a producer are not copyrighted under federal statutes. However, they enjoy "common law" protection against pilfering. The opinion in the case points out that while copyrighted works are subject to "fair use" by the publisher, unpublished uncopyrighted material enjoys even greater protection because it is not subject to "fair use." That phrase is defined as a use for "some legitimate, fair and reasonable purpose, such as illustration, comment, criticism, and the like."

The kind and degree of protection given to a commodity often determines the life of the industry which depends upon it. A body of law which would water down title to literary property would injure the consuming industries as well as the writers, and would ultimately pour all works, whether on manuscript, wax or film, into a public well from which all could draw. For the benefit of all who deal in literature and its by-products the strongest legal sanctions

should be imposed against misappropriation. The difficulty is to accomplish that end but at the same time to avoid stifling further creative effort in similar fields. Browning owned the poem about Blenheim; his ownership could not of course extend to the battle as a subject for further creative work.

To draw a line between the protection of work already done and the field which yet remains open to others is a delicate and often extremely difficult problem. It would be this writer's disposition, in doubtful cases, to afford greater protection to completed works. Art is long and a lifetime is fleeting; the world of unexploited ideas is infinite, and in close cases the risks of preventing creative writing may well be balanced by securing to the writer a better assurance of a livelihood from his finished works.

NOTE TO PRODUCERS

Too much polishing weakens rather than improves a work.

—Pliny The Younger, b. AD 61

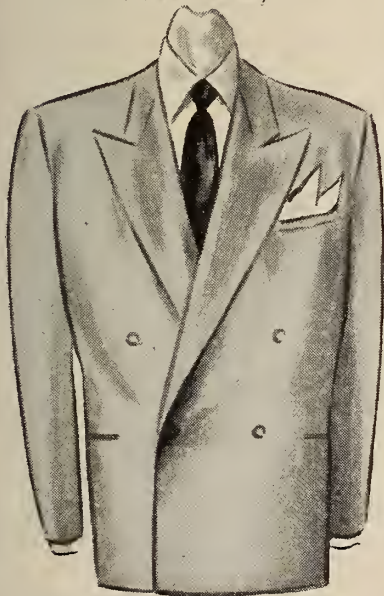
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Everett Freeman

(Continued from Page 4)

IT is to be noted, and commendably, that in recent months McCarten has shown a marked tolerance in his work. Whether this is the mellowness that comes with age or a growing awareness of the fact that every oyster, try as it might, cannot produce a pearl, I do not know. The fact remains that the tone of the department has assumed a gentler cast, making it brighter, cleverer and wittier.

Let us hope this continues. Let us hope that Mr. Ross and Mr. Mc-

Carten, literate men both, realize that an industry the size of Motion Pictures must, of necessity, be geared to please as vast a cross-section of paying customers as possible.

If the bulk of filmland's output does not please the editor of the *New Yorker*, that is quite understandable. But to maintain a constant rear-guard sniping at the industry, its people and the word "Hollywood" is a type of bigotry and decadence not too far removed from some of the world's major ills today.

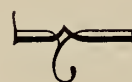
Frank Hursley

(Continued from Page 15)

movies be somehow so managed that the centrality of the author in the creation of the movie be preserved through to what appears on the screen. As the movies exist, the author is a man who gets lost in the shuffle. If a screenplay is worthy of production, it should contain the values common to all artistic creations, values that are the imprint of intelligence and sensitivity and honesty. If the screen writer isn't that sort of person, he shouldn't be writing screen plays. If his view of life isn't worthy of attention, if his understanding of people and what makes them tick isn't penetrating, if his feeling for what is dramatic doesn't spring from having lived and thought about it, he shouldn't be in the business. That, I believe, is the point of view of *The Screen Writer*. But if a man is entrusted with the writing of screenplays precisely because he does have those rather rare qualities, and because he and not somebody else has seen how a story which means something can be memorably told on the screen, the rest of the business of get-

ting out movies should be arranged to the end of preserving and not nullifying his intent.

IT is pretty obvious from reading *The Screen Writer* that things are stirring in the movies. Very exciting things. The movies are being challenged to meet the potentialities of the medium. Possibly no one has stated that challenge more pointedly than William Wyler: "Hollywood seems a long way from the world at times. Yet it does not have to be. Unfortunately, at the moment, the motion picture in Hollywood is divorced from the main currents of our time. It does not reflect the world in which we live. It often has little meaning for audiences at home, and even less for audiences abroad. It is time that we in Hollywood realized that the world doesn't revolve about us." Well, that seems to call for some kind of revolution (if you will pardon the expression), and for my money, the blueprints for it are being drawn up, month after month, in *The Screen Writer*.



Samuel Fuller

(Continued from Page 13)

he was called. Hah! He couldn't write my trailers."

"He couldn't write his goddam name!" said Martin.

"He couldn't write!" snarled Cobb. "Remember me in my office pounding that mill, turning out hot copy? I used to be quite a guy in my day—and one morning this shtoonk stuck his head into my office and like a coloratura said: 'I'm Bill Paine—new new writer—can I bother you a minute, please, Mr. Cobb?'"

Cobb stared at his glass, remembering the scene, crimson creeping up his flabby cheeks.

"He's the unko who was always shouting about leases."

"That's right," muttered Cobb. "That's why—look, you can see for yourself."

COBB led Martin out through the back and across a vast rolling lawn. He told him to stay on their side of the hedges.

Martin heard voices. He poked his head around the hedge and saw Cobb walk up to Bill Paine. Martin saw red. Bill Paine was in bathing trunks, smoking a Cabana, drinks nearby. A funny little man in a funny little derby, looking through glasses, was standing in front of Bill Paine, who was sitting in a director's chair. Cobb fixed Bill Paine a drink. The little man with the derby gave Bill Paine a big bag. It looked like one of those pouches Bank of America employees used to cart the money from cage to vault.

"Thanks for leasing us your thirty-year-old story again, Mr. Paine," the little man with the derby was saying. "Where do you want me to put this forty thousand dollars?"

"Oh," said Bill Paine wearily, jerking his thumb to the left behind him, "over near the pool. Cobb."

"Yes, sir?" said Cobb.

"How is the pool today?"

"Dry, sir."

"Dump that dough in the deep end," Bill Paine said to the little man with the brown derby. "Cobb will count it later."

"Yes, sir, Mr. Paine, thank you, sir."

The little man walked up to the pool and dropped the bag into the dry deep end and walked off the grounds. Martin tossed his cigar away. It tasted like the first rough draft of the last original he failed to sell.

"Cobb," said Bill Paine.

"Sir?"

"I'm going to dress. My checkered trousers, white coat, and see that Moe is fed."

"Yes, sir. Mr. Trepple of Television Combine has an appointment with you in twenty minutes."

"I'll be ready." Bill Paine waved him away.

COBB passed the flabbergasted Martin, gestured for him to follow, led him back into the house and up to Paine's bedroom where he got Paine's clothes ready for him. Martin stared at the wardrobe and went back to the kitchen for another drink. Cobb joined him a moment later.

"What do you think of that schnook!" snapped Cobb. "Forty grand—know what that yarn was? His damn short short he had in a house organ. Something published by a milk company. *Forty grand!*"

"I don't get it."

"Well, it's our own fault. We were pretty smart guys. Lease out a story? That's crazy. Red talk! That's what it was. And what does a hunky like Paine do? He starts that ball rolling, fights to organize Writer's Lease. We were selling originals for big dough and he was hanging onto his yarns unless somebody wanted to lease 'em. Dope, we called him. Remember?"

"Who wants to remember?" grunted Martin.

"Yeah . . . we were smart guys. Come on, I've got to feed Moe."

"Who's Moe?"

Martin discovered Moe was a lion. "Paine always wanted a real live lion for a pet. Said it reminded him of the good old days. So he got one—and I feed it every day. You never ate this good, Dan."

Martin watched him feed the lion. "Cobb!" Paine called out.

Martin ducked behind the cage

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and watched Bill Paine, now neatly encased in the white coat and loud checkered trousers, stroll up to his pet and scratch his mane. Moe the lion licked Paine's hand.

"Yes, sir," said Cobb.

"I think I heard Trepple drive up. Bring him out here."

"Yes, sir."

MR. TREPPLE of Television had the contract all ready and held his fountain pen out.

"How d'ya like my new pet?" asked Paine, stroking Moe.

"Fine, Mr. Paine," said Trepple. "Now about the contract for the fourth television rights to your 1947 short short story *The Dark Night*?"

Paine signed and waved Trepple off the grounds. "Cobb!" Paine called out.

But there was no reply. He turned and heard two shots. Moe growled and ducked behind Paine. For a moment the master was rooted to the ground — then he cautiously went into the house, Moe tailing him just as cautiously.

Bill Paine gasped. On the floor were his wonderful butler, Joe Cobb — and a stranger — a stranger who looked familiar.

"Must've been a suicide pact," Paine was saying over the phone. "I figure that Cobb killed this guy and then killed himself. I *know* it was a

pact because when I found 'em dead they were still shaking hands. It *must've* been a pact."

"Who was the other guy?" asked Paine's agent.

"I don't know. I saw a bedbug exterminator bag in the kitchen. Maybe he was the exterminator."

"Sounds wonderful, Bill. Think you can build from there?"

"I think so; at least I got a swell beginning. Who do you figure can play it?"

"I've got a package all lined up for you, Bill. Just tell me how long a lease you want on this one."

"Six months," said Paine flatly. "I think I'll call it *Bedbug*. Like the title? Yeah, it's got something. It's about time we went back to one-word titles."

"It's wonderful. We can rake in at least thirty grand every two years on that one. Bill, you got another annuity. Should I phone the police now?"

"No, maybe in half an hour. I want to go through this other guy's bag. He's got all kinds of funny equipment inside it — and anyway, he looks familiar. Maybe I'll remember his name."

Bill Paine hung up and looked at the dead man and stroked Moe's mane. "If I could only get a good finish to this one, Moe, that's all, just a good finish. . . ."

★ ★ ★ ★

Guy Morgan

(Continued from Page 9)

sucking his moustache. "National Nicht ma fut!" he said. "Ah've an awfu' lot o' richt guid overmatter yet fra Burns Nicht in the Glesga edition. That'll dae ye noo fine, ah'm thenkin'."

THE Editor patted me on the shoulder. "I really think we're getting somewhere. You get the idea now? Just go home and think it over."

The months passed pleasantly. My telephone rang.

"Morgan," said the Editor, "I want you to write me a good adult news story about real people."

"I have it here," I said.

The Editor skimmed through the top page of my manuscript. "I should forget about that one for the moment," he said. "As a matter of fact I've got Priestly working it up, with Bridie for the Scots dialogue, Cronin on the mining background, and Barbara Hutton for the woman's angle. We're bidding for Mason to take care of the Siamese cat side."

Two weeks later two men removed the Persian carpet and left me a small Indian rug. I overheard them saying something about Bernard Shaw.

Two years later the story was printed. No one read it. I was fired.

I didn't mind. Bare floors are chilly.

SWG Charges Blacklist Conspiracy

(Continued from Page 2)

"These individual plaintiffs are, all of them, according to employment contracts drawn by defendants, persons possessed of a special, unique, unusual, extraordinary and intellectual character. *The restrictions upon freedom of expression in the writing of motion pictures complained of herein is a direct threat to the free exercise of the liberties of their calling* and to their capacities to earn livelihoods in the profession of their choice. To the end of safeguarding the screen plays already produced or in the future to be produced by them against restraints which will prevent and inhibit creative work and of keeping open the market for literary material of quality and integrity, the individual plaintiffs join in this action on behalf of themselves and all other authors and screen writers similarly situated. The individual persons named as plaintiffs sue as individuals and as representatives of a class to protect rights which they enjoy in common against dangers which are common to them all.

"The individual plaintiffs seek equitable relief against the combination and conspiracy herein described which has asserted the power to adjudge, and actually is engaged in adjudging, the propriety of the political views, the economic beliefs and the social connections of these plain-

tiffs, and to blacklist any of them whose associations, beliefs and conduct *might not conform to standards which are impossible to define in advance*. To protect their civil liberties from invasion by an organization which controls the entire industry, these plaintiffs bring this action."

THE defendants are described as having "the power to control, through their connections and affiliations, the entire American market of screen plays." With a brief outline of their functions, they are identified as follows:

The Association of Motion Picture Producers

The Motion Picture Association of America, Inc.

The Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers

Paramount Pictures, Inc.

Loew's Incorporated

Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation

Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.

Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation

Columbia Pictures Corporation

Universal Pictures Co., Inc.

Eric Johnston, president of the Motion Picture Association

and the Association of Motion Picture Producers.

"Acting in concert (the complaint states), these defendants are able to exercise a domination over every writer employed in the production of motion pictures *as well as over every writer who desires to enter this field*.

* * * to dictate what the American people shall see and what they shall not see in almost all the motion picture theatres throughout the nation.

"Under threat of depriving any writer of an outlet for his literary work, they may dictate the organizations to which he may belong, the persons with whom he may associate and the opinions which he may express. They may compel any writer to abandon or suppress his views and to follow whatever political, economic or social opinions *the combination chooses to adopt*.

"Acting in concert these defendants have *effective power* to make the industry they control an instrument for any line of propaganda which at any time seems to them desirable, and to change that propaganda at any time this private group considers the economic, political or international situation to demand. They have made themselves an agency for enforcing the proposals of a minority group in

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Congress which the Congress itself has not enacted into law.

"In brief, by using its power to suspend or terminate employment and to deny writers access to market on account of their views or associations, *this combination may strip from the screen its capacity to give free expression to the various conflicting views and attitudes of the several groups which make up the American democracy and may cause all offerings on the screen to follow a single and appointed line.*"

The complaint describes the "character of the conspiracy" as restraint of trade and deprivation of civil rights. Reference is made to a meeting of the defendants in New York City on or about November 25, 1947, "to appease state and federal legislative committees which were giving wide publicity to what they labelled un-American activities and communist infiltration into the motion picture industry."

THE defendants are charged with being motivated by a fear of criticism by groups opposed to the free expression of ideas and free dramatization of controversial subjects on the American screen. "Defendants feared loss of profits unless they could avoid unfavorable publicity from any source, however intolerant or hysterical. Defendants were not motivated by a desire either to improve the quality of screen plays or to rid the industry of influences which they themselves considered dangerous.

"*They knew there was no com-*

munist or subversive propaganda presented on the American screen. Well knowing all the political views and associations of their employees, they had, prior to the publicity given by the legislative committee, taken no steps to censor their employees.

"The aim and purpose of the conspiracy was and continues to be to form a combination of all the producers in the industry to the end that by joint action the entire industry can immediately respond to and appease any wave of hysteria directed at the screen, by offering to blacklist screen writers and other employees who happen to be temporary victims of that hysteria.

"They knew that writers of talent and originality would from time to time inevitably entertain unpopular views. They knew that if—in the absence of a combination—any single producer should discharge a writer because some group with access to publicity protested, other producers would be free to profit by producing and exhibiting his plays. *They knew that the standards of un-Americanism set by these legislative committees and other intolerant groups were impossible to define and were largely based on suspicion, hearsay and innuendo.* They concluded that in order to enforce these uncertain standards it was necessary to bind each single producer to agree not to compete with other members of the industry by employing any writer whom the group as a whole desired to eliminate from the screen.

"In furtherance of the conspiracy they unanimously agreed on a reso-

lution (the Association of Motion Picture Producers' action publicized on November 25, 1947) which in effect *set up an illegal court to pass on the propriety of the political opinions and the associations of all persons engaged in writing for, directing, acting or assisting in the production of pictures for the screen.*

"The standards set up by the combination went beyond membership in the Communist Party to include any association, social or political, with persons who advocated reforms or changes in the American political system which the combination might choose to characterize as an 'overthrow' of government by 'illegal or unconstitutional methods'."

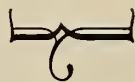
In this way, the complaint charges, the defendants did and still combine, conspire and confederate to do the unlawful acts alleged. "These unlawful acts and things have had, are having, and if allowed to go on will continue to have the effect of:

"Controlling and restricting the market for the original plays which the individual plaintiffs are capable of producing and were offering for the screen;

"Imposing a paralyzing censorship upon dramatic writing for the screen which, if permitted to continue would result in the elimination of original treatment of vital subjects on the screen;

"Surrendering the integrity of the industry to any intolerant group able to promote a wave of unfavorable publicity with respect to any kind of writing or any type of association; and

"In these, and in other, collusive



Screen Writers' Guild Studio Chairmen

(June 15, 1948)

Columbia — Louella Macfarlane; alternate, Maurice Tombragel.

MGM — Anne Chapin; Studio Committee: Sonya Levien, Joseph Ansen, Robert Nathan, George Wells.

Paramount — Richard Breen.

Republic — Sloan Nibley; alternate, Patrick Ford.

RKO — Daniel Mainwaring; alternate, Martin Rackin.

Fox — Richard Murphy; alternate, Wanda Tuchock.

Universal-International — D. D. Beauchamp.

Warner Brothers — Ed North.

ways, placing restraints upon the channels of trade, blocking access to the free market, and imposing burdens upon commerce among the several states."

IN discussing the purpose, scope and action of the alleged conspiracy, the complaint comments on the resolution of the Association of Motion Picture Producers by stating, "The resolution is deliberately so broad as to cover any proposal of reform which is condemned by influential groups as illegal and unconstitutional. Advocates of the Tennessee Valley Authority would have fallen within the ban of the resolution at the time that organization was attacked as unconstitutional. In a like manner the abandonment of the gold standard was regarded as an overthrow of the Constitution by illegal means by Justice McReynolds of the Supreme Court of the United States dissenting from the judgment of his associates in the Gold Clause cases."

It is pointed out that the terms "member of a party" and "member of a group" are left undefined in that resolution. "It was drawn by skilled legal counsel. *The lack of definition of these terms was intentional and deliberate.* The uncertainty of its terms, the fact that they may be expanded or contracted without logical inconsistencies *makes the resolu-*

tion a more effective instrument of intimidation."

THE injury to the Screen Writers' Guild and to the minimum basic contract is summarized as follows:

"The Guild is injured in its good will as a going concern by restrictions upon the exercise of the original talent of its members * * * and in its capacity to discharge the obligations which it has assumed with respect to the employment, the remuneration and the working conditions of its members. The strength of the Guild as an organization is in large part dependent upon the basic contract setting forth the minimum terms of employment and conditions to which employers are induced to comply through the process of collective bargaining.

"The conspiracy and combination of defendants as carried out *makes the Guild's basic contract subject to revocation by standards so vague and uncertain that its validity as a contract is to a large extent destroyed.* The writer whose work is satisfactory to his employer may now be discharged if through adverse publicity or prejudice other producers in the industry decide that he is a bad publicity risk because he has incurred the displeasure of some prejudiced group.

"Prior to the conspiracy some of the individual writers now blacklisted were told by their employers that their work was satisfactory and that

their contracts would be renewed regardless of the charges of the legislative committees which at that time had already received wide publicity. This action by individual employers was reversed by concerted action of all the producers.

"The uncertain standards of censorship, based as they are upon the desire to placate intolerant or prejudiced groups, will, if continued, reduce all pictures to a common level. Writers of originality and ability to treat serious subjects will be deprived of an opportunity to exercise their unusual talents. Real life which is a proper subject matter of drama will under this censorship have to be closed to the screen or to be falsified."

IN conclusion, the Thurman Arnold complaint petitions the court for relief as follows:

I. That the employing companies in the industry be perpetually enjoined from any meeting, communication or collective action or decision — save in a lawful process of collective bargaining — respecting the hiring or firing of employees.

II. That the three Associations be forever enjoined from meeting together and from individually and collectively taking any action — save in a lawful process of collective bargaining — resulting in or leading to the discharge, the refusal to hire,

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or the blacklisting of any screen writer.

III. That the defendant producers be enjoined from taking any concerted action with respect to

(1) Refusing to purchase or acquire plays, scenarios, or other literary property, from any person because that person holds a membership in any particular group, however that group may be defined;

(2) Refusing to purchase, acquire or produce plays, scenarios, or literary property because it falls into a particular classification or description or because it deals with a particular theme, or with any individuals or characters in a particular manner:

(3) Restricting, eliminating or discouraging the use of any type of material, subject matter or characters, on the basis of any social, economic or political criteria.

Or, in the alternative, if the relief in I, II, and III above is not granted:

IV. That, in order to determine the nature and extent of the threat against plaintiffs, discovery be order-

ed as to the intent and purpose of defendants in discharging screen writers by collective action along the following lines:

(a) What individuals in the industry will determine whether any writer is to be barred from employment by all the producers;

(b) How will the evidence against such writer be collected;

(c) Will such writer be confronted with charges, and if so by whom;

(d) Will such writer be represented by counsel before the industry takes action, or will the precedent of the writers already discharged be followed;

(e) Will such writer be confronted with the witnesses against him;

(f) What existing or past political parties do the defendants refer to as advocating the overthrow of the government by force;

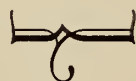
(g) What do the defendants mean by "groups"; does the term include social associations;

(h) What constitutes "member-

ship" in the "groups" referred to in the resolution. Does the opinion of the majority of the group determine its character as a forbidden organization. If so, must dissenting members resign if a so-called un-American position is taken by the majority; and

(i) What does the advocacy of the overthrow of the government by "unconstitutional and illegal methods" refer to. Does it mean methods which have already been determined to be illegal or unconstitutional by the courts, or methods which may in the future be decided to be illegal or unconstitutional.'

There are three appendices setting forth the objects of the Screen Writers' Guild as stated in Article II of its Constitution and By-Laws, the statement and resolution issued by the Association of Motion Picture Producers on November 25, 1947, and excerpts from the testimony of John Moffitt, Jack Warner, Eric Johnston, Adolph Menjou and Rupert Hughes given at Thomas Committee hearings.



Thurman Arnold Fund

The question of opposing blacklisting concerns every member of the Guild. It should be clear, as it is emphatically stated in the current editorial, that the suit undertaken by the Guild has no reference to any political point of view.

This is a fight to protect the interest of every member against a practice that is vicious no matter at whom it is directed and that may, if allowed to go unchecked, be turned against any of us recklessly and capriciously.

The response to the request for voluntary donations to help defray the expenses of the suit has been good. To date almost \$15,000 has been pledged and the largest part of this sum already paid in. We need at least \$10,000 more; this should be forthcoming even if in small amounts from every individual member, for, in the long view, every member must realize that blacklisting is a weapon which, if the occasion arises, can be turned against him.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Collier Young

(Continued from Page 5)

trade. Those words: "corny," "co-incident," "wiener," "gimmick," etc. I, too, detest them. Yet, I've caught this tired patois right in the front teeth from a number of writers engaged in spurning my suggestions. Couldn't we concede that both sides are guilty? That both camps have come up with a broken string?

A GAIN, how right you are, Mr. Taylor, in pointing to that abused word "pace." True, the concern for this priceless ingredient, compounded of moonlight and common sense, is the province of the writer and the director. And it is in this precise relationship that I have seen certain "story experts" perform signal service. Among the directors themselves, there are some remarkable hatchet men.

The allegedly ruthless hand of the producer seems like a caress compared to certain directors who direct with a pencil. Time and again the respon-

sible story man has, with no thought of personal safety, thrown himself into this crossfire to protect the writer. The same service has also been rendered in connection with a star who won an essay contest in high school the year the papers got mixed up and has been a frustrated writer ever since.

Mr. Taylor goes on to mention that horrid word "contrive." Indeed, it is a curse on our industry. Such a blight is it that no one sex, class, kind or ethnological group could be alone held responsible for its evils. I flatly deny that this small ragged army of "story experts" could cause it, or cure it. Rather, let us *all* fall upon our knees and pray for divine guidance. It will take all of that. Despite the deserved praise which Mr. Taylor heaps upon English films, I would say that our British brothers had better try prayer, too.

O NLY the other night I suddenly woke in the very sweat of discovery. I thought I had subconsciously

hit upon a completely new way for a boy to meet a girl. This gleaming nugget I would place at the disposal of some writer who needed it (another service cheerfully rendered by "story experts"). Imagine, then, how dashed I felt the next day to learn that the hero who picks up a fan at the opera and returns same to the heroine, had been used in several pictures before. It all goes to show. . . .

Don't you honestly think there's room for both of us in this exacting and exhausting trade, Mr. Taylor? Let us live together in peace. I have your phone number. Have I your respect?

OR FOR POPCORN

"Do you come to the play without knowing what it is?"

"O, yes, Sir, yes, very frequently. I have no time to read playbills. One merely comes to meet one's friends, and show that one's alive."

—Fanny Burney, *Evelina*

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James Gunn

(Continued from Inside Front Cover)

and "Whiskey" look dreadful in print, so there are all sorts of dodges to get around them. The answers to the classic question, "What'll you have?" range something like this:

(1) "Nothing right now, thanks."
(The director shoots this with the character's back to the camera.)

(2) "Whatever you're having."

(3) "Something that tastes good."
(Suitable only for comedy ingenues and Billie Burke.)

(4) "The usual." (Why *that* one invariably gets by, I'll never know.)

And in ordering a second round, God knows, the actual booze is never detailed. A sharp cry of "Waiter!" or better yet, a simple gesture, will do the trick.

The old Hays Office File comes in handy in more ways than this, however. The saving lines can be varied occasionally, though not too much, because they will miss the point. They rarely have anything much to do with character, since mostly they are flat contradictions of the situation on the screen.

Take vice (double goody). The big haunt about vice is that it cannot, specifically, be treated attractively. This means that not only must the characters suffer for their carryings-on, but they can't show a glimmer of enjoyment while actually at it. There is only one really firm, classic line to get you out of this mess: "It never gave me a moment's happiness." Or, for immediacy, "Do you call this happiness?" Or the subtle but risky Lady Doth Protest Too Much technique: "Of course I'm happy! Sure I'm happy! (Sob!)"

Or retribution—*there's* a dilly. In cases where the sinner, by some likely freak of fate, winds up rich, famous, and admired, it is necessary to pull out the old *file* to show the secret mag-gots working within. So far as I know, the old basic line is still the best: "Whatever I've done, I'm paying for it now." This is generally said just before the waiters serve the Cherries Jubilee, and only cynics would

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doubt that God's punishment is done. There are many classic variations, appealing not only to the censors but to the ladies who are scheduled to play the parts. The most touching is probably the Wistful Retrospect, as in: "Sometimes I wonder what happened to the little girl with the pig-tails." This is usually said by a lady who has sinned her way into a very tasty life indeed and wouldn't be caught dead in a pigtail unless it was something whipped up by Antoine, but by God it shows regret.

In exceptional cases, permission is granted to put the punishment in the tentative future. This leads to our dear old favorite: "Somehow I know I'll have to pay for this." One lovely

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And thanks for the good wishes and the lucky deals I made through *The Screen Writer*.

thing about lines like this is that the audience has heard them so often that they don't listen, with the result that they get exactly the impression you were trying for in the first place, before moral judgments pushed in.

And as for sex—well, any amount of rolling in the old haystacks can be forgiven if, toward the finish, our heroine looks her leading man right in the eye and says, "I'm thankful we've done nothing to be ashamed of." This, of course, does not apply to the picture as a whole.

Scratch an artist and you surprise a child.
—James Huneker

A LISTING OF SCREEN WRITERS' CREDITS
EARNED ON FEATURE PRODUCTIONS
OF CURRENT AND RECENT RELEASE

CREDITS

MAY 1, 1948 TO JUNE 15, 1948

A

EDNA ANHALT
Sole Screenplay YOUNGER BROTHERS OF MISSOURI, W.B.

EDWARD ANHALT
Sole Original Screenplay THE GENTLEMAN FROM NOWHERE, Col.

MICHAEL ARLEN
Character Basis DEVILS CARGO, (Falcon Productions) Film Classics

B

HERBERT BAKER
Joint Screenplay (with Carl Foreman) SO THIS IS NEW YORK, (Enterprise) U.A.

JOHN TUCKER BATTLE
Sole Screenplay SO DEAR TO MY HEART, Walt Disney Productions

SYD BOEHM
Sole Screenplay UNDERCOVER MAN, Col.

ALLEN BORETZ
Story Basis THE GIRL FROM JONES BEACH, W.B.

GEORGE BRANDT
Sole Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS L7-6 (S) Par. (Jerry Fairbanks, Inc.)
Sole Screenplay POPULAR SCIENCE J 7-6 (S) Par. (Jerry Fairbanks, Inc.)

OSCAR BRODNEY
Sole Original Screenplay EVERYBODY'S SWEETHEART, U.I.

C

GEORGE CARLETON BROWN
Joint Screenplay (with Edward E. Seabrook) HERE COMES TROUBLE, (Hal Roach) U.A.

W. R. BURNETT
Sole Story YELLOW SKY, Fox

GEORGE CALLAHAN
Joint Screenplay (with Bob Considine) THE BABE RUTH STORY, Mono.

WHITMAN CHAMBERS
Novel Basis BLONDE ICE, Martin Mooney Prod.

MONTY COLLINS
Additional Dialogue, A JOE NAMED PA-LOOKA, Mono.

DWIGHT CUMMINS
Joint Story and Joint Screenplay (with Dorothy Yost) LOADED PISTOLS, (Gene Autry Prod.) Col.

D

W. SCOTT DARLING
Sole Original Screenplay, THE GOLDEN EYE, Mono.
Sole Screenplay, KIDNAPPED, Mono.

VALENTINE DAVIES
Joint Screenplay (with George Seaton) CHICKEN EVERY SUNDAY, Fox

ALBERT DE MOND
Additional Dialogue, WHISPERS IN THE DARK, Rep.

I. A. L. DIAMOND
Sole Screenplay, THE GIRL FROM JONES BEACH, W.B.

E

HENRY EPHRON
Joint Screenplay (with Phoebe Ephron and Marian Spitzer) SILVER LINING, W.B.

PHOEBE EPHRON
Joint Screenplay (with Henry Ephron and Marian Spitzer) SILVER LINING, W.B.

JULIUS J. EPSTEIN
Joint Play Basis (with Philip G. Epstein) CHICKEN EVERY SUNDAY, Fox

PHILIP G. EPSTEIN
Joint Play Basis (with Julius J. Epstein) CHICKEN EVERY SUNDAY, Fox

CYRIL ENDFIELD
Sole Original Screenplay, THE ARGYLE SECRETS (Eronel Prod.) Film Classics

F

STEVE FISHER
Sole Screenplay, I WOULDN'T BE IN YOUR SHOES, Mono.

BRADBURY FOOTE
Sole Screenplay, WHISPERS IN THE DARK, Rep.

CARL FOREMAN
Joint Screenplay (with Herbert Baker) SO THIS IS NEW YORK, (Enterprise) U.A.

G

PAUL GANGELIN
Sole Original Screenplay, SON OF GOD'S COUNTRY, Rep.

GERALD GERAGHTY
Sole Original Screenplay, GRAND CANYON TRAIL, Rep.

MORTON GRANT
Sole Story, YOUNGER BROTHERS OF MISSOURI, W.B.

MAURI GRASHIN
Sole Original Screenplay, ARTHUR TAKES OVER (Sol M. Wurtzel Prod.), Fox

HOWARD J. GREEN
Sole Original Screenplay, THE WINNER'S CIRCLE, Fox

H

DON HARTMAN
Joint Screenplay (with Stephen Morehouse Avery) EVERY GIRL SHOULD BE MARRIED, RKO

EDMUND L. HARTMANN
Joint Screenplay (with Howard Irving Young, Albert Cohen and Jack Harvey) LET'S LIVE A LITTLE, Eagle-Lion

JACK HARVEY
Joint Story (with Albert J. Cohen) and Joint screenplay (with Edmund L. Hartmann, Howard Irving Young and Albert Cohen) LET'S LIVE A LITTLE, Eagle-Lion

BROWN HOLMES
Joint Screenplay (with Virginia Cook) SHED NO TEARS, (Equity Pictures) Eagle-Lion

NORMAN HOUSTON
Sole Original Screenplay, INDIAN AGENT, RKO

EDWARD HUEBSCH
Joint Screenplay (with Harold Smith) and Sole Adaptation BLACK EAGLE, THE STORY OF A HORSE, Col.

K

LAURA KERR
Joint Adaptation (with Allen Rivkin) MY DREAM IS YOURS, Michael Curtiz Prod.

JOHN KLEMPNER
Sole Story, GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY, Fox

HARRY KURNITZ
Joint Screenplay (with Dane Lussier) MY DREAM IS YOURS, Michael Curtiz Prod.

L

JONATHAN LATIMER
Sole Screenplay, DARK CIRCLE, Par.

ALFRED LEWIS LEVITT
Sole Screenplay, HUMAN GROWTH (S) Eddie Albert Productions

MINDRET LORD
Sole Story, DARK CIRCLE, Par.

DANE LUSSIER
Joint Screenplay (with Harry Kurnitz) MY DREAM IS YOURS, Michael Curtiz Prod.

M

RANALD MacDOUGALL
Sole Screenplay, JUNE BRIDE, W.B.

DON MARTIN
Novel Basis, SHED NO TEARS (Equity Pictures) Eagle-Lion

O

JOSEPH O'DONNELL
Sole Original Screenplay, RETURN OF THE LASH, PRC

P

LEONARD PRASKINS
Additional Dialogue, THE WINNER'S CIRCLE, Fox

In this listing of screen credits, published monthly in THE SCREEN WRITER, the following abbreviations are used: COL—Columbia Pictures Corporation; E-L—Eagle-Lion Studios; FOX—20th Century-Fox Film Corporation; GOLDWYN—Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.; MGM—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios; MONO—Monogram Pictures Corporation; PAR—Paramount Pictures, Inc.; PRC—Producers Releasing Corporation of America; REP—Republic Productions, Inc.; RKO—RKO Radio Studios, Inc.; ROACH—Hal E. Roach Studio, Inc.; UA—United Artists Corporation; UNI-INT'L—Universal-International Pictures; UWP—United World Pictures; WB—Warner Brothers Studios. (S) designates screen short.

R

MAURICE RAPF

Joint Adaptation (with Ted Sears) SO DEAR TO MY HEART, Walt Disney Prod.

BETTY REINHARDT

Joint Screenplay (with Samuel Hoffenstein) GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY, Fox

ALLEN RIVKIN

Joint Adaptation (with Laura Kerr) MY DREAM IS YOURS, Michael Curtiz Prod.

STANLEY RUBIN

Sole Screenplay, A JOE NAMED PALOOKA, Mono.

TIM RYAN

Joint Screenplay (with Gerald Schnitzer and Edmond Seward) HIGH TENSION, Mono.

S

GERALD SCHNITZER

Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with Edmond Seward and Tim Ryan) HIGH TENSION, Mono.

EDWARD E. SEABROOK

Joint Screenplay (with George Carleton Brown) HERE COMES TROUBLE (Hal Roach) U.A.

GEORGE SEATON

Joint Screenplay (with Valentine Davies) CHICKEN EVERY SUDAY, Fox

EDMOND SEWARD

Joint Screenplay (with Tim Ryan and Gerald Schnitzer) HIGH TENSION, Mono.

HAROLD SMITH

Joint Screenplay (with Edward Huebsch) BLACK EAGLE, THE STORY OF A HORSE, Col.

MARIAN SPITZER

Joint Screenplay (with Phoebe and Henry Ephron) SILVER LINING, W.B.

T

ROBERT TALLMAN

Joint Story (with Jason James) DEVILS CARGO (Falcon Prod.) Film Classics

ROBERT THOEREN

Joint Screenplay (with Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.) THE O'FLYNN, U.I.

LAMAR TROTTI

Sole Screenplay, YELLOW SKY, Fox

W

MALVIN WALD

Additional Dialogue, UNDERCOVER MAN, Col.

ROBERT C. WILLIAMS

Sole Original Screenplay, DESPERADOES OF DODGE CITY, Rep.
Additional Dialogue, SON OF GOD'S COUNTRY, Rep.

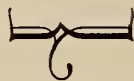
Y

DOROTHY YOST

Joint Story and Joint Screenplay (with Dwight Cummins) LOADED PISTOLS (Gene Autry Prod.) Col.

HOWARD IRVING YOUNG

Joint Screenplay (with Edmund Hartmann, Albert Cohen and Jack Harvey) LET'S LIVE A LITTLE, Eagle-Lion



Travel Notes

THE charge that screen writers never leave Hollywood to see how other folks live and behave is given the lie this month by the amount of transcontinental and transatlantic activity on the part of SWG members.

Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett are bicycling through England before taking on France and Italy.

Sheridan Gibney and family will spend two months on his recently acquired ranch near Ovando, Montana, where telegrams are delivered by coyotes.

F. Hugh Herbert flew to New York for 48 hours to see his daughter, Diana, make her stage debut by replacing June Lockhart in his play, *For Love Or Money*, at the Henry Miller Theatre.

Roy Chanslor has returned from New York where he delivered his second book to Simon & Schuster for fall publication. His last novel,

Hazard, is a current Paramount picture starring Paulette Goddard and McDonald Carey.

The Chilean Government pinned its Order of Merit, Highest Grade, on Lester Ziffren for his work in Santiago as head of the Offices of Inter-American Affairs in Chile during the war. His operations covered press, radio, motion pictures, science and education.

Alice Penneman and husband spent a fortnight camping in the King River valley.

Houston Branch, whose current novel, *Diamond Head*, is a best seller, paid a visit to Azusa.

Milton Krims leaves in July for three months in Italy to work with Director Henry King on the filming of 20th Century's *Prince of Foxes* for which he wrote the screenplay.

Malvin Wald, on leave from his Columbia contract, is in Germany writing a documentary for the Army.

Oliver H. P. Garrett has just returned from a sabbatical year in Costa Rica, where he completed a novel.

Marvin Borowsky is in the mountains of Michoacan, Mexico, for six weeks to do some painting.

Henry Myers, who wrote the *Alice In Wonderland* screenplay with Edward Eliscu in Paris last winter, is remaining in Switzerland for the edelweiss.

Val Burton has left for Czechoslovakia, John Wexley was last heard from in Budapest and Laszlo Vadnai is on his way to that capital. Sidney Sheldon is in Europe making the Grand Tour.

George Seaton, Valentine Davies and Jay Dratler are back from a glance at South America.

Harry Tugend departed for New York to build up his strength before writing the Treasurer's Annual Report.

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ILLINOIS:

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Paul Romaine — Books, 184 N. La Salle St., Chicago 1

MASSACHUSETTS:

Book Clearing House, 423 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.

NEW YORK:

Books 'n' Things, 73 Fourth Ave., New York 3
Brentano's — Periodical Department, 586 Fifth Ave., New York 19
Bryant Park Newsstand, 46 West 42nd St., New York 18
44th St. Bookfair, 133 W. 44th St., New York 19
Gotham Book Mart, 51 W. 47th St., New York 19
Kamin Dance Bookshop and Gallery, 1365 Sixth Ave. at 56th St., New York 19
Lawrence R. Maxwell — Books, 45 Christopher St., New York 15

CANADA:

Roher's Bookshop, 9 Bloor St., Toronto

EIRE:

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OFFICIAL SUBSCRIPTION AGENT FOR SWEDEN AND DENMARK:

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Next Month and Thereafter

THE NEWSPAPER MYTH

By Lionel Houser

PSYCHIATRY LOOKS AT MOVIE PSYCHIATRIST

By Albert Deutsch

Science Editor of PM

WHAT DIVORCEMENT WOULD MEAN TO WRITERS

A Symposium

THE SHAPE OF TELEVISION CONTRACTS

By Dwight Taylor

WRITER ON THE SET

By Phil Dunning

CURRICULUM FOR MOTION PICTURE TRAINING

By Kenneth Macgowan

Drama Department, UCLA

A DETECTIVE LOOKS AT THE MOVIE SLEUTH

By Raymond Schindler

Criminologist

FOUR-FIVE-SIX

By F. Hugh Herbert

"92ND STREET DIARY"

By Charles G. Booth

COMMERCIAL FILMS: A Growing Market

By Michael Amestoy

Future Articles by

WILLIAM A. DRAKE

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FRANCIS SWANN

MALVIN WALD

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F. HUGH HERBERT

JULIAN JOHNSON

MAE MARSH

SEENA OWEN

MARY PICKFORD

MACK SENNETT



Letter From Siam

By PRADIT PRABANG

CHIENGMAI, 21 July — Very happy to have *Screenwriter Book* of June-July from cousin in Hollywood. I think M. Samuel Fuller correct in hidden statement of his story—but here we still sell outright, not lease, like there. But the time will arrive; one's writings cannot and must not be sold away forever.

One joy we have as production of films increases: we do not have to look on Japanese film propaganda as in war times. Chinese and Indian films are here again and the Americans, too. Very interesting to see a Dot Lamour; in Miss Korat we have her duplicate who specializes in *pan-ung*. Her film, *Panung Khao*, or *Old Panung Girl* was a delight and very popular.

Klon'pet ton, the new and only company, has just completed the third Siamese film since the war; a fourth and sixth are ready but the fifth has been withdrawn. Luang Sivaram, author of *Pai*, the third film, is at work cutting it now. Here, you know, the author supervises cutting of his own film—by agreement with the maker—and there are no collaborations among authors—by agreement among authors. Authors are not many in Siam and they are very economic-minded.

Lao lùk cân is being written by Pra Manudharm, a documentary drama of a young farmer in the Nam Sak valley. Phra Pong, our leading director, would like to do it in Technicolor but the weather disagrees; it is difficult to store color film—or any film—in our climate, and moreover, it is impossible to get Technicolor or its camera.

Aditya Mekong, the producer-cameraman, will do a *nirat* story, *Phum hon*, about the princess who is loved by an elephant. Strange as this may seem to the Western mind, it is a sweet tale from the *Nok khum*. Every author would like the honor but it falls to Miss Ruang Ruang who is the mother of Mr. Mekong's seven daughters and also his wife.

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The Screen Writer

Vol. 4, No. 2

AUGUST, 1948

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In accordance with the Editorial Committee's policy of a rotating editorship, LEONARD SPIGELGASS and PAUL GANGELIN will be Editor and Managing Editor respectively for the September issue.

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With the Naked Eye

By

VALENTINE DAVIES

THE newly revised "Schedule A" of the Minimum Basic Agreement between the major studios and the Guild has been in effect since August 1st. If it has been your observation that the screen writer's position in the Motion Picture Industry has undergone no radical change since that date, you are probably correct. We have, however, made a number of substantial gains.

The most spectacular is in the matter of billboard advertising. Where the former agreement simply called for screenplay credit on 24-sheets, the producers have now agreed that when one or two writers receive screenplay credit, the type will be no less than 2½ inches in height. When more than two names are involved, the type will be no less than 2 inches. While your name will be considerably smaller than that of the second supporting soubrette, it will be quite easily visible to the naked eye. Thus writers will be relieved of the burden of carrying magnifying glasses, field glasses or small telescopes about with them when a picture they have written is being advertised. Two and one-half inches is a lot bigger than it sounds. If you doubt this, measure it out for yourself. Many of the present credits run less than an inch in height.

Another significant advance requires the studios to give screenplay credit on magazine, newspaper and radio advertising directly controlled by them. This isn't quite as good as it sounds because most of this advertising is paid for by local exhibitors. But it is obviously the best we can do since there are no means by which

the Guild or even the studios can control the advertising done by countless exhibitors throughout the United States. In advertising, other than 24-sheets, the name of the individual writer will appear in type no smaller than 10% of that used for the title of the photoplay. The important gain here lies chiefly in the principle established. The former "Schedule A" covered only advertising on billboards and in trade papers.

IN the matter of novelized versions of screenplays, a long-standing injustice has been rectified. Producers will hereafter require that proper credit for the screenplay be given on such published editions, and on any published versions of the whole or substantial part of the picture script. The producers have also agreed to give screenplay credit on any radio broadcast of a screenplay which is sponsored by the producer. Yes, we know they don't sponsor many broadcasts themselves, but several studios have done so in recent years.

In addition to these positive gains, the Guild has been able to obtain revisions and re-wordings of various sections, the chief purpose of which was to facilitate the handling of credits by the Guild. One of the most important of these permits the Guild itself to demand an arbitration even though no protest has been filed. Anyone who has worked on the Credits Committee knows that it is our aim to reduce, rather than increase, the number of arbitrations. But this clause will permit the Guild to protect the interest of a writer where there is reason to believe that intimidation

has prevented his filing a protest against an evident injustice.

IN the paragraph dealing with the authorized wording of credits, the word "original" has been eliminated from both "original story" and "original screenplay." Hereafter, "original story by" will be "story by" or "story and screenplay by." Though there seems to be some difference of opinion about this, both the Credits Committee and the Executive Board felt that the use of the word "original" was quite undignified. As a matter of fact, the membership so expressed itself several years ago. Authors do not label their works "original novels," nor dramatists "original plays." The obvious implication of "original story" and "original screenplay" seems to be that there is something startling and extraordinary in the fact that a play or story for the screen possesses any originality.

One phase of "Schedule A" which remains unchanged is that which permits the studios to commit themselves in advance to give screen credit to the author from whom they purchase basic material. It should therefore be clearly understood that the Guild's jurisdiction of writing credits covers only work done under employment. It does not control credits based upon work that is purchased by a studio. While certain injustices occasionally arise from the fact that credits on purchased material are not subject to arbitration, it is nevertheless true that a large number of writers who sell material to the studios are Guild members. Therefore,

(Continued on Page 21)

David Wark Griffith

1875-1948

A man whose name was once synonymous with motion pictures has died. His technical contributions to the production of motion pictures in the industry's pioneer days won him the title of "inventor of the craft." His fundamental techniques for telling a story in pictorial terms must still be mastered to-day by every screen writer and director no matter how far he may want to depart from theory.

Though he passed from the Hollywood scene during the 1920s, he created some 430 motion pictures, writing most of them, directing all. It is reported that they grossed \$60,000,000, yielding a profit of \$25,000,000 to him and his associates. But his estate reflects no such wealth.

D. W. Griffith was an extraordinary human being, a personality indigenous to our profession, and the following reminiscences by those who knew him well will give you some idea of his many talents and the methods the early film makers used to create to-day's movie audience and movie industry.

LIONEL BARRYMORE

D. W. GRIFFITH is dead and there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. Yes, but a trifle belatedly.

He moved quietly, a silent and rather sorrowful figure in this film capital for the last ten years. He could go anywhere unmolested; even the frenzied idiots of Vine Street refrained from demanding his autograph. He had invented and perfected most of the techniques now in use in the cinema but few know it and the few that do care not.

As Joseph Jefferson said, there is nothing deader than a dead actor. This state of affairs is very usual in a republic. I would suggest respectfully before it is too late that somebody ask Lee de Forest to have breakfast in a drive-in.

When Reginald Barlow died, I happened to see Emma Dunn, who delivered herself of a classic. I said, "Well, Reggie is dead. He was a fine actor."

"Yes," she replied, "when he was

in any way nearly suited, he was superb."

I added, "He was a pretty nice fellow, too, wasn't he?"

"Oh, yes, yes—well—" she amended slowly, "as nice a fellow as any actor is."

Yes, Griffith was a genius and as nice a fellow as any really great director is. The few people he wasn't nice to probably shouldn't have existed anyway. I feel honored to have been associated with him in the smallest way although, bless him, he always tried to make one feel his contribution was great even though it might have been piffle. He was my dear friend and I salute him with all my heart.

Lionel Barrymore came from Paris where he had been studying painting to act for D. W. Griffith in *The New York Hat* in 1912. Anita Loos, a San Diego high school girl, had sold the story for \$15.

CECIL B. DE MILLE

IT seems foolhardy and perhaps a little profane to reckon Dave Griffith's wonderful lyricism and stirring scenic investiture in terms of

something as earthy as banking. But banking was in Griffith's hair back there in 1914, when he was about to prove to most of us that he had some rare secrets locked up in that expansive bosom. I was not in a position that would entitle me to explain the relation of art to legal tender until a few years later when I was fired for having spent my entire budget on one-half of a picture. Griffith had pretty much that same problem with a venture which, when put to film, burst upon the world with atomic force. *The Birth of a Nation* was an answer to those of us who were wilcatting—for ideas, not oil. The picture did two things, one collateral in nature and one of prime importance to the future of the industry. In the first it exposed one of the richest lodes of screen material—the Civil war. It is still so. In the second and more important, it showed that the screen—and D. W. Griffith—were capable of bigness. I think most of us would like to have achieved the credit that has gone to his re-creation of Sherman's march to the sea.

The bankers almost stopped Sherman. In those days they viewed film

Recollections by

LIONEL BARRYMORE
CECIL B. DE MILLE
TONY GAUDIO

LILLIAN GISH
F. HUGH HERBERT
JULIAN JOHNSON
MACK SENNETT

MAE MARSH
SEENA OWEN
MARY PICKFORD

makers with what might modestly be termed distrust. Griffith had planned to spend \$100,000 on *The Birth of a Nation* and had enlisted the sympathy of a film company whose head was Harry Aitken. Aitken had courage but the stockholders—men of substance and standing—saw only upheaval, distress and debits in Griffith's proposed 12-reel orgy of race feeling and bloodshed. Aitken's firm had a quarter of the interest and when the stockholders refused to budge, Aitken bought the interest and departed the firm. Griffith himself demonstrated that in all art there is a good deal of footwork. He went from door to door, of his friends, to obtain enough capital to finish *The Birth of a Nation*.

So much for Griffith's durability. He had an artistic sensitiveness, or a sensitive artistry, rarely found in a person equally able to depict man's tougher and swarthier emotions. He knew epic and he knew subtlety. His *Intolerance* was more than a "giant metaphor." It was that to be sure. And this, too: it was a tremendously bold and articulate experiment at a time when Hollywood's subtlety and abstraction had not gone much further than one-reel "westerns," although there were a few full-length predecessors such as *The Squaw Man*.

If a person were called upon to evaluate Griffith's immense and complex contributions to the art form of the motion picture, he could do no better than to say that Griffith gave soul to the screen. While others were photographing action and movement, Griffith moved his camera close to his players. He thereby moved it closer to life. The audience moved with the

camera, with the result that the Griffith-inspired etchings of tragedy, poetry, terror, scheming, turmoil, starvation, death—all the things that make up life—were experienced with almost original pain by hushed and voiceless customers. In other words, he was the first man to photograph thought.

Cecil B. De Mille, actor, playwright and producer in the theatre, has been a director-producer in motion pictures since 1912.

TONY GAUDIO

D. W. GRIFFITH was a man who was never stopped by any obstacle to accomplish a progressive step in camera technique. Most of the things we do to-day were created by him. The four years that I was fortunate enough to work with him in the old Biograph Company were the years of my best training and education in cinematography.

Into the conventional angle of the long shot—like a full stage scene—he introduced the technique of cutting in close-ups and moving shots. He made us see people's emotions for the first time. By using the camera's iris, he invented the "Fade In" and "Fade Out"—the pictorial curtain. When everybody favored and used flat lighting, he decided to use a spotlight for "back lighting" and we soon found through that device ways to give roundness and depth to our picture subjects. His device of shooting scenes of parallel action so that they could be intercut taught us the tricks of creating pictorial suspense.

He used to say, "Be precise in everything from the story down to the smallest technical detail. Movie-

goers know more than we producers think they do."

Stars and crew members loved him because he was always friendly, always helpful, and so very human.

Tony Gaudio, coming from a Roman family of noted photographers, began his career with the old Vitagraph Company in New York and later, in 1911, came to Hollywood.

LILLIAN GISH

HE taught us that we were taking the first tiny steps in a glorious new medium that had been predicted in the Bible. He called it the "universal language." He believed that when it could be brought to its full power it would bring about the millenium since it could break down the barriers that so many other languages create. And he believed that, if properly used, it could bring peace to all people. So he wrote on celluloid a new formula to cure the ills of the world. His record in this new medium is there for all to see in the films he made from 1906 to 1912.

It is strange that he, who loved the written and spoken word so dearly, should have created a new art form without ever putting a word on paper. Never, during the time I was with him, did I see him work from a script of any kind.

I can still hear his indignant cry on reading that *The Birth of a Nation* was full of race prejudice. He said that such critics had not seen the picture for, otherwise, they would have known that the colored man when bad had been made so by the

white man. He had been raised by the colored people and loved and understood them. The story of that film concerned individuals, not a race.

In that hour of critical attack, the idea for his favorite film, *Intolerance*, was born. As I look again at this picture, I wonder how its four intricate stories with all their details could have been kept so clearly in the head of one man who worked without the help of a single note. This film was his answer to the critics of *The Birth of a Nation*.

Little poems or stirring dramas—*The Romance of Happy Valley*, *Broken Blossoms*, *Hearts of the World*, *Way Down East* and *Orphans of the Storm*—were all monuments that he left to point the way for others who might care enough to fight to make their dreams articulate on film. May their gratitude to a loving, patient mentor reach him. I know how deeply David Griffith believed in the goodness of the human family—how sincere was his desire to bring peace to a confused and tortured world.

Lillian Gish was brought to stardom by Griffith in *The Birth of a Nation* and later appeared in most of his successes.

F. HUGH HERBERT

THERE is a phrase you often hear in Hollywood, generally in reference to an old-timer who may have fallen upon evil days. It is a grim, rather graphic phrase, cruel and even wise. This oft repeated phrase is this "The parade has passed him by."

You hear it mostly upon the lips of brash youngsters, heady with some recent commercial success; rarely do you hear it from older, kinder, more pensive people. They are too sensitive to the analogy of passing parades. They know, too well, how soon the triumphant blare of trumpets can recede and fade away, until even the memory of the fanfare is gone with the wind.

In the last decade of his life, while D. W. Griffith was living here in retirement, I heard the phrase repeated many times in reference to

him "*The parade has passed him by.*" Young, arrogant producers have said it to me, producers who have never contributed to the screen one innovation, one creative impulse. "*The parade has passed him by.*" Young directors have said it to me, directors who are so infatuated by the techniques which permit them to keep their cameras moving that they are blind to the fact that their stories remain static. "*The parade has passed him by.*" Young writers have said it to me—writers who consistently ignore the simple fact that a motion picture is primarily a series of images which assault the emotions, and not the reproduction on a sound track of countless words.

"*The parade has passed him by.*" To my great shame I have always remained silent during these discussions. When I came into this industry twenty-eight years ago, D. W. Griffith was the first director I ever saw shooting a picture. The awe with which I watched him in action, and the great respect and admiration which I felt for him then, and feel for him now, might have impelled me to break my silence during these last years, when they were saying that the parade had passed him by. It is more becoming to defend the living than to eulogize the dead. I could, and should have pointed out that the parade of which they spoke had formed around D. W. Griffith, the pioneer and innovator; that for years he led the parade, not in new technique, but in a philosophical understanding of his medium, in his instinctive recognition that the screen must be a mighty instrument of mass propaganda; that the parade, in passing him by, may well be out of step today, because his imagination and artistry set a pace that only a few can maintain.

The years take their toll, and sooner or later the parade will pass all of us by. Few of us, in this industry, when the time comes, will have contributed a fraction of what D. W. Griffith devised; none of us will have contributed more.

F. Hugh Herbert, a vice president of SWG, is a writer-director at Twentieth Century-Fox.

JULIAN JOHNSON

I KNEW D. W. Griffith from the first days of *The Birth of a Nation*—I met him for the first time, a few months after the New York opening—but I think my most interesting talk with him, at least the one that is most significant in my memory, occurred just after he had finished *Intolerance*. This was in Chicago, where I was editing *Photoplay Magazine* with all the zest a young reporter could bring to a new industry which, in the enthusiasm of youth, he almost believed he had discovered.

Intolerance had not yet been publicly shown. He had it run for me, privately, and I was spellbound, as I am to this day, by the breadth of its conception, the splendor of its great scenes and the poetic beauty and truth of its smaller ones. I did the best I could with compliments, trying hard not to make them sound fulsome.

But D. W. was not especially happy about the picture, and certainly not optimistic about its success. "I had to make this picture," he said, "because I have found so much bitterness, so much useless contention, so much jealousy, all my life. I suppose it is a general human failing. People just won't put up with each other—that's the curse of the world. It has been that way down the ages, it caused us this trouble (we were then in the midst of World War I) and mark my words it will cause more trouble. People will tell you that the love of money is the root of all evil or that ambition is the root of all evil, but that isn't so. People just won't put up with each other. My political beliefs, my religious beliefs, my social system are better than yours and accordingly, it's my duty to make you accept them whether you want to or not. That was my theme . . . people won't put up with each other . . . I tried a long time for a title. I think *Intolerance* hits it, but I'm not too certain that the general public will like to be shown their faults, even in an allegory; they'd much rather have a story about good people and bad people, in which the bad people get

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It Isn't Me

By

LEONARD SPIGELGASS

FROM Santa Monica came the wind that ruffled the ninon curtains and the sable hair of Miss Lind, who sneezed. "Do you want it closed—the window?" Mr. Brady's voice was warm with concern. Miss Lind shook her head. "Mr. Gort was saying how warm he was." Mr. Gort hastened to disclaim warmth, even offered to close the window. Miss Lind gave in gently, but, in the end, it was Mr. Clews who closed the window, closed it and turned to hear Miss Lind saying, "I love it. Understand that, I love it. I just feel that in certain scenes it isn't *me*."

"Which ones exactly?" Mr. Brady used his firm voice with the fatherly overtone, so successful at varying times with Richard Barthlemess and Charles Coburn.

Miss Lind grasped the bridge of her nose with her thumb and forefinger, each delicately enameled a faint shell. "I don't know. I don't *pretend* to know. But I have a sense, deep inside, that I'm not her and she isn't me. It's a feeling more than anything."

"Of course it is," said Mr. Gort. "Instinct. I know. Let's take the opening, that walk through the forest, down from the crags, that search, that seek, that want—that's *you*. Isn't it? *Isn't* it?"

"Yes." Miss Lind removed her thumb and forefinger from the bridge of her nose and fixed her eyes on Mr. Gort. "Yes, that *is* me. I can play it. I can feel it."

"I knew it the moment Clews suggested it," said Mr. Brady cordially.

"It was in the book," said Mr. Clews.

"And I loved it in the book," said Miss Lind. "I really did, Mr. Clews. Only even then I felt something—I can't put my finger on it, something, well, I hate to use the word, God knows I'm not a prude, but something immoral."

"She just killed a man," said Mr. Clews.

"No, no!" said Mr. Gort. "It wasn't murder. Not the way, for instance, you'd say Ruth Snyder murdered. It was more instinct, psychological, impulsive, obsessive. That's the way I see it, psychoanalytical, right out of Freud."

"But murder, Mr. Gort, wanton murder." Miss Lind's lips were tight. "I just don't see me doing it."

"But we *don't* see you," said Mr. Brady. "That's the brilliance of the screenplay."

"That's the way the book was," said Mr. Clews.

"We find you coming down from the crag," said Mr. Brady. "We know you're tortured. Something's on your mind. You make your way to the station, wake up the sleepy agent, buy a ticket, you get on the train, and that's where you meet Derek Burke. It isn't until the end that we know, though we *suspect*, we don't know, but Burke knows all along and doesn't care, and then it's the climb up to the crags again that sets you free."

"She doesn't climb up any more," said Mr. Clews. "Mr. Gort didn't want her to climb back up."

"It's over, finished, done in the ice house," said Mr. Gort. "They'll be reaching for their hats, the moment Burke kills him."

"I agree," said Miss Lind. "When a thing's over, it's over."

"I kind of liked her climbing back up," said Mr. Brady stubbornly.

"What happens to the body if she doesn't?" asked Mr. Clews.

"The hell with the body," said Mr. Gort. "Who cares?"

"Exactly my point," said Miss Lind. She smiled brilliantly. "I've a brainstorm." She turned to Mr. Clews and let him shine in the incandescence of her teeth. "I'm not a writer. I don't pretend to be one. But sometimes I get ideas that haunt me so I can't sleep. And I'm not even suggesting for a minute that you use it. Look, I'm no fool. I do my job, and you do yours. You give me the words, and I say them, and do the best I can to put whatever little I have in them. But I'm not exactly illiterate."

"I'll say you're not," said Mr. Gort. "That dialogue you put in *Recompense* was brilliant. It was *you*."

"Yes, it was, and I know Mr. Clews will hate me for it. I would if I were in his place. But I had to, Mr. Clews. I couldn't read the lines. They weren't me."

"They altered the whole characterization," said Mr. Clews.

"But I could *stage* it!" said Mr. Gort testily.

Mr. Brady's sinuses forced him, at that moment, to blow his nose trumpetingly. He said "Excuse me," and added, "What's your idea, Miss Lind? I'm very anxious to hear it."

"I'm not a writer," said Miss Lind. Mr. Clews said nothing.

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The Newspaper Myth

THE greatest killer of young, or potential literary talent, especially screenwriting or playwriting talent, is neither poverty nor difficulty of getting published or produced, nor even laziness or despair. It is newspapering. Working on newspapers has aborted more possible Ibsens and O'Neills before they were born (born in the literary sense of creating things worthy of their gifts), and has chewed into tattered, bored, frightening workmen manufacturing dreary pulpstuff, more gifted might-have-been dramatists and novelists than all other villains put together.

I suppose most will not agree with me, because it is hard to fracture a myth as old and well-believed as the notion that being on the editorial payroll of the *Kankakee Gazette*, *New York Times*, or *Pittsburgh Press*, is the finest novitiate in the world for the man who wants to be a writer. All I have to say applies with as much justification to authoring of novels and other forms of creative prose as it does to screenwriting and playwriting; but newspapering exercises an even more malign hand in spoiling, stultifying and permanently sterilizing the seeds of talent for dramatic writing than it does in the other fields.

By "newspaper writing" I do not mean doing a daily column, or composing editorials or book reviews, or any other kind of reviews, or advertising soliciting or similar things; I mean being a newspaperman—a reporter who goes out and covers meetings of the Water Commission, or the City Council, or the City Hall beat, or covers crimes; or a rewrite man who sits in the office and rattlebangs out the stories all day long, or a city desk man, or a slot man or a man on the copy rim. I also include sportswriters, though the level of

writing they indulge in on almost all newspapers is so menial and hackneyed that I feel sure it is not even necessary for anybody to point out the lethal effect of a few years of this straightjacketed, stylized assembly-line experience on any possible real talent. I mention this particularly because the fiction is especially strong that sportswriting is a wonderful compost for the fertile literary seed to sprout in. Unfortunately the product of the sports page serves only to corrode, not to encourage, growth. After a year or two in this humus of worn-out verbs and tattered adjectival phrases, the germ of any imaginative life is quiescent. I suppose the brilliance of a few in the past like Ring Lardner is responsible for the perpetuation of this nonsensical fiction, and I do not doubt that there have been literary gifts so sturdy that they could occasionally survive, but they are rare, and some of those who might be named, like Heywood Broun, attained fame all right, but not as novelists, playwrights, or screenwriters.

ONE ought to state one's qualifications when making these kind of blunderbuss statements: I wore out shoe leather and typewriter ribbons for eleven years on newspapers in San Francisco and New York as leg man, feature writer, beat man, rewrite man and desk man. I spent most of the time in pursuits which are so generally believed to be tonic for writing—doing garden variety reporting, covering every kind of news story, and coming in and writing the story for the home edition after phoning it in earlier, I did it because I had to earn a living, and because I liked doing it very much, and not because the thought ever entered my head that it

would be good medicinally for any talent I might have had. This awareness of the dangerously meningital effects of continued newspaper work on creative gifts did not strike me until years later and only when I began thinking about some of the fine potential talents I had known, and wondering why they had withered. I suppose I could be accused of rationalizing my own shortcomings, and using this as a convenient means of excusing myself to myself for all my own faults, but I do not think this is the case. I have arrived at my own conclusions on a reasonably factual basis after long analytical rumination. I have been puzzled by the persistence of this newspaper myth, and by the absurd deference which people, especially in pictures, exhibit toward the thing called "newspaper experience." I can think of very few things less useful or more harmful to the flowering of any kind of genuine literary ability.

PART of the strength of the legend regarding newspapering as the best training for writing lies in the fallacy that a great many good men were thus schooled; but almost without exception it will be found on closer examination that they only stayed in the newspaper business a few months, like Sinclair Lewis, or else wrote a column, which has nothing whatever to do with being a newspaperman. Another girder in the myth's structure is the idea that it is an "adventurous" profession in which a writer sees a good deal of life, that is to say he brushes against seamy people and great people, and violence and historical events. This also is unfortunately fallacious. Being a non-participating spectator at an occasional event has

by Lionel Houser

nothing at all to do with the business of investigating, understanding, encompassing, and re-creating human characters filtered through and modified by one's own personality. That, after all, is a necessary ingredient of dramatic writing.

Emphasis upon flamboyant people and circus events, a mental photo of Hildy Johnson and the other non-existent people of *The Front Page*, both tend to corrupt his values, so that he no longer recognizes that (for instance, let us say) the struggle within herself of a quiet middle-aged school-teacher whether or not to buy a new cloth-coat, or whether or not to have the daring to go to a dancing-school and learn the rumba, is more moving and tender and important than the kind of large, violent, noisy events and decisions which are looked upon as news by the newspaperman. Such an outlook becomes an unbreakable unconscious habit by and by; the senses become blunted as by constant eating of heavily-spiced, violently contrasted heavy meals. The simple fare ultimately becomes unpalatable and tasteless to the jaded, swollen, scarred taste, and, to go on with the figure of speech, the writer can find no sustenance in good bread and cheese and an apple.

NEWSPAPERING breeds impatience. The newspaper story must be gotten in a frenzied rush, phoned in, written, cleaned up and forgotten by tonight. What you might unearth or write tomorrow or next month on today's story is no good; today or never. Several years of this kind of high-pressured outlook, with work segmented into daily compartments, fosters a childish, immature attitude toward a real job of literary work. I know, of course, that there are ex-

ceptions; but in the main the tragic thing that happens to a great many talented newspapermen when they start out to write a play or a novel is that if they don't have some kind of quick tangible result they become hopelessly discouraged and abandon the project within a few days, or weeks at the most. I should like to have a dollar for every manuscript by a newspaperman which has been dropped after Chapter One, or Scene One. It has been ground into his very grain, into his very unconscious, into his measuring of all values, that you get it quick—by deadline—or drop it. Naturally, there are a great many other reasons, like ordinary laziness or despair or neurotic twists, why projects are abandoned; but my point is that people who might otherwise not be thus discouraged, who might otherwise go on to realize their fine potentialities, have been spoiled for the unavoidable long haul by the hurry-up, get-it-done-today-or-it's-no-use thinking which prevails in the city room.

Newspaper writing deals with facts; even when garbled or blown up, there is little exercise of imagination and creative faulties. The reporter sets down what happened. And he does not set it down in terms of character but of either sensationalism, as in the Hearstian papers, or of unadorned accountancy as in the dull New York *Times*. In any case, he does not create nor can he give free play to imagination, nor does he learn anything about the inner ways, the secret universal ways, of people feeling, acting on each other, nor how to identify himself with people and sink himself utterly into them and be them, nor how to transmute this process into words-on-paper. He learns nothing of his true trade, and he thickens and scars his senses.

IN the main he writes a highly stylized kind of newspaperese which is neither the speech people speak, nor the English they narrate fiction with, but a dulled, tired, bastard series of office-forms. There are a half-dozen variations for nearly every familiar event, and most newspapers employ them unfailingly. These clichés are so familiar there is no point in repeating them, but the point is that they are considered acceptable as "writing"; more than that, the reporter and rewrite men who try to deviate much, who fail to use the clichés, will have their work rewritten by the copy desk or thrown back at them to do over. Ambitious reporters sometimes delude themselves, when composing an immortal epic confected of one cliché after another, that the use of occasional exotic adjectives and phrases constitutes "fresh" writing. This is a childish habit to which lady feature writers and very young reporters are especially given. It is true that there are exceptions to this—but they are very rare. Nearly every newspaper in America contains nothing but varying combinations of phrases which have been so over-used that anybody can burlesque them with the tiniest exaggeration.

NEWSPAPERMEN write so much that they lose their taste for writing. It is not the truth that working on a newspaper teaches facility in writing, and speed, and makes words come easily. All it does is make a pat, worn-out set of tired phrases, one for each kind of event, come easily; it is sort of like pressing a button labelled: FIRE IN HISTORIC LANDMARK or MURDER VERDICT and having a record rise to the turntable and play. The reason for this

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The Manuscript Market

While our figures are not complete because of unreported sales, those that we do have would indicate a decline of between 20 and 25 per cent in the purchase of story material by motion picture studios during the past year.

It is encouraging to report, however, that more than half of the properties bought, according to our figures, were original stories and screenplays—94 originals as against 85 novels, plays and published short stories. Seventy of these originals

were bought from SWG members who also sold a total of 18 published properties.

Less than 200 purchases were made, it is believed. The causes are several: studio retrenchments and reorganizations, indecision about what constitutes entertainment, the divorce suit and low morale on the part of producing executives who are *waiting* for "name novelists" to produce a best seller. From 70 purchases in the first four months of the year beginning July 1, 1947,

the decline went to 53 in the next four months, and rose to 56 in the last period.

Despite adverse box office reactions in the past to books and plays unsuited for the screen and the additional high cost of preparing stories for such material which frequently lacked screen drama, the studios generally adhered to the policy of buying "pre-sold" properties by acquiring 41 published novels and 19 plays.

Here is a breakdown of our figures:

	to November 1, 1947 July 1, 1947	November 1, 1947 to March 1, 1948	March 1, 1948 to July 1, 1948	Total for Year
<i>Originals:</i>				
Stories	19	26	26	71
Screenplays	13	8	2	23
	—	—	—	—
	32	34	28	94
<i>Published Material:</i>				
Novels	13	9	19	41
Books	3	0	0	3
Articles	0	1	2	3
Plays	16	3	0	19
Radio	0	1	0	1
Short Stories	5	5	7	17
Poems	1	0	0	1
	—	—	—	—
	38	19	28	85
<i>Total Purchases:</i>	70	53	56	179
<i>Sold by SWG Members:</i>				
Originals	25	22	23	70
Published	7	6	5	18

S.W.G. offers the following list of literary material acquired by motion picture studios for the four months ending July 1st:

COLUMBIA PICTURES
JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD, Kazan, Published Story
DEVERY FREEMAN (with Everett Freeman), The Facts of Love, Unpublished Story
EVERETT FREEMAN (with Devery Freeman) The Facts of Love, Unpublished Story

SAMUEL FULLER, The Lovers, Original Screen-play
JAMES EDWARD GRANT, The Big Jump, Unpublished story
JOHN McPARTLAND, Portrait of An American Communist, Published Article
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Teaching The Young Idea How To Feel

By

KENNETH MACGOWAN

LOOKING out from the cool, and quiet of the academic shades—and back three or four years—I seem to remember studio debates on the value of education. They were one-sided debates. A writer said just what he thought of some producer who had never known the benefits of higher education, and the next day another writer tore another producer apart for trying to live up to an LL.D. acquired in his misspent youth.

Is education good for the film maker? Or for the man or woman who works in the other two theatre arts—the stage and radio? I think so, but that is not the point of this article. Education may or may not be good for the theatre arts, but I know that the theatre arts are good for education.

George Pierce Baker began showing the theatre at a reluctant Harvard faculty forty-five years ago. He won the undergraduate body, or at least a very vocal part of it. He attracted to his playwriting class in Cambridge and later in New Haven youngsters who turned out to be Eugene O'Neill, Sam Behrman, Sidney Howard, George Abbott, Philip Barry, Maurine Watkins, Talbot Jennings, George Sklar, Albert Maltz, George Haight.

From this demonstration that playwriting and education could be profitably associated it was a short but very vigorous step to bringing all aspects of the theatre into the university curriculum—and some of them down into the high schools. Now radio and the film follow along.

I mention radio first because it is taught far more widely than film

in the universities, and it threatens to displace the interest of the high school student in stage production. This is a natural result of the ease and economy with which radio can be taught and enjoyed through a mike, a recording machine, a record, and a loudspeaker, compared with the far greater expense of working with film.

Yet the skills as well as the uses of the motion picture are being taught in universities. Under the head of visual aids in education, many institutions teach the use of film. A few, like Minnesota and Penn State, maintain production units to make film for distribution by their extension divisions. More colleges are exploring these possibilities, and also looking for people who can teach film. Four universities have definite curriculums—Southern California, New York University, the College of the City of New York, and UCLA.

BESIDES the basic question of whether education is good for the theatre, the movies and the radio, and whether they are good in turn for education, there are a lot of other problems involved in the teaching and learning of these three theatre arts. Can you teach them effectively without turning an educational institution into a trade school? Can you teach film or radio without teaching theatre? Who can teach these subjects effectively—men and women with A.M.'s and Ph.D.'s or students and graduates of film studios and radio stations?

When I say I think UCLA has the

answers, I take no credit, for the basic scheme of teaching there and the basic curriculum were worked out by a faculty committee before I became the chairman of the new Department of Theatre Arts.

No university should be a trade school; its job is turning out men and women with broad interests and sensitivities as well as trained minds. (Incidentally, education, even in a trade school, won't open the doors of the film studios.) Too much specialization in either the stage, the screen, or radio, is profitless. UCLA avoids this not only by requiring a broad education outside a major area, but also by giving the student of film or radio a grounding in theatre, too.

THE three theatre arts are joined in one department at UCLA—and not elsewhere—because the two younger arts have grown out of the older, because the younger can be taught more easily on the basis of training in the fundamentals of theatre, and because this prevents too narrow a concentration on the newer, superficially more attractive, and speciously more profitable arts.

To be boringly concrete, during the first two years all students in the Theatre Arts Department take courses in the fundamentals of acting, the history of the theatre, and the physical crafts involved in stage production. They must pass a course called Social Aspects of Mass Communication that is designed to give them a broad sense of the audience they may be dealing with, and their responsibilities if they elect to practice or teach theatre arts,

and are lucky enough to be able to do so.

In the last two years of study—and in graduate work, too, if desired—the student who majors in theatre goes on to more specialized courses. If the student wants to major in motion pictures or radio, the work of his last two years is devoted to those areas, in addition to courses in other fields of education.

But how can film and radio, as well as theatre, be effectively taught? UCLA follows a familiar and well tested pattern. This is first to study certain single aspects in one-semester courses, concentrating mostly on theory, and then to study and practice those theories in workshop courses. Thus the student who takes camera, cutting, or directing through a lecture course, practices what he has learned, and, of course, learns far more by applying his knowledge to production work in three successive workshop courses. Students are not allowed to specialize too strictly until they are sure where their interest and capabilities lie.

LEARNING the motion picture skills on the basis of stage skills seems generally a sound principle. For instance, the actor learns how to use his voice, how to interpret character, how to time his lines, how to relate his part to another's—all in terms of theatre. This is fundamental to all acting. When he comes to study acting for the screen—or the radio—he learns how to modify his technique to suit the new medium.

The value of this approach is obvious in writing. The basic course is playwriting; no one is admitted who cannot turn in a one-act play, one act of a long play, or a radio script that shows he has a feeling for dialogue. In the playwriting course he learns how to build scenes, present characters, and organize a story in terms of the theatre. This takes two semesters, but it provides the man who wants to write for film or radio the fundamentals of his craft. He may then take a one-semester course in fictional screen writing or in dramatic radio writing. There he learns

the special techniques that modify what he has learned in playwriting. He needn't take the playwriting course, however, but can enter either of the others directly if he presents the instructor with a well-written full-length play or a comparable radio script.

Of course there are other forms of writing for the screen and radio, and here playwriting is not a prerequisite. If the student wants to learn to write documentary or educational films, he has only to show the instructor that his writing is easy and effective. The same goes for radio writing of the documentary and narrative type.

But who can teach theatre arts effectively? The man or woman must have had training. He can get that in drama through the many universities that have dramatic departments. The universities with radio departments can supply trained teachers in this field. As yet, institutions of learning can provide few teachers of motion pictures, but the Army and Navy, through their very extensive production of training films developed a surprising number of men who can teach various aspects of motion picture work. It is still necessary in film teaching—and in radio and theatre, too—to find specialists for certain subjects. The Hollywood film and radio studios can supply these specialists; UCLA uses them to teach courses in set and costume design, make-up, animation, and cutting, and to give individual lectures in all aspects of the film.

Who, I ask the readers of *The Screen Writer*, would care to teach screenwriting next year at UCLA?

If a university that teaches the theatre arts should not be a trade school, then what will its students gain from their studies?

The first answer may be—jobs. But that depends on the native ability of the student, his persistence, and his good fortune. And if, for example, he is lucky enough to get a studio job as an actor, or a writer or a cutter, he will go farther faster—granted native ability—than if he had to learn his craft entirely within studio walls. The same is true for radio.

Then, too, the graduate may want to teach. In theatre and radio the field is wide and widening. Even in film, opportunities exist and are increasing; within the past few months two great state universities have asked advice on how to staff the curriculums in motion picture work that they are contemplating.

IN motion pictures there is another field of opportunity. I have mentioned documentary and teaching films and also animation. UCLA gives five undergraduate courses and four on the graduate level that deal specifically with the documentary and teaching film, in addition to the courses in basic skills that apply to the non-fictional as well as the fictional film.

In the activities of the workshop courses, there is an inevitable pull towards the production of documentary and teaching films. We make individual scenes from Hollywood scripts, but only as practice for the actor, the director, the cameraman, and the cutter. We can hope only very rarely to find student ability in writing and directing that will justify the making of a dramatic short. The documentary and teaching films are another matter. There the student can do good, solid, presentable—and useful—work. Though only the first of the three courses in animation has been given so far, the students have completed the story board for a film to teach perspective drawing. Aided by the animation class and certain courses, a graduate student in geography has completed as part of his master thesis a documentary film on Palm Springs, beginning with its geological history. On the graduate level our own students will do work of this kind, but such films will also be a product of the workshop courses as they develop.

TEACHING the theatre arts—specifically the motion picture—is obviously good for education when it serves other departments, as in the case of the Palm Springs thesis film. But I feel it makes a much broader

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The Cliché Masters: A Case History

By
DAVID CHANDLER

DOES anybody here want to buy a nice original screenplay, in mint condition, consisting of a ribbon copy and five carbons, typed on an excellent quality Eaton bond? The reverse pages, being blank, would make fine scratch paper, or shredded, could serve as wrapping for china or glassware. The present writer knows of one such script available for a song and he believes he can persuade the author to settle for scratch-paper money rather than write the whole thing off as a Total Loss.

It will not affect the value of the scratch-paper that the proper (or typewritten) side has been written in blood and has been well-spoken of by a couple of people whose judgment you'd be bound to respect. After all, herrings have been wrapped in Shakespeare.

The author of the nice original screenplay has appointed this writer as his literary executor. He has also left behind him a mordant screed, moving in its classic Sophoclean frustration. In it he has drawn a stunning portrait of the screen writer struggling against a certain fate, daring the gods, and then, inevitably falling victim to the consequences of his own folly. It also constitutes a kind of record of what people who actually buy scripts *say* (as, for example, when Mr. Goldwyn writes for these august pages) as distinguished from what they *buy*, or to be precise, what they *make*.

We all know what they *say*, don't we, fellows? Mr. G. was saying it just the other month, remember? It goes something like this: Don't be a lousy rewrite man. Be a creative giant, that's what we need. Write your guts out. A piffle for money. Write in terrible isolation and if it's good they'll buy it, they'll give you a percentage, they'll give you any-

thing. Only the one thing they loathe and won't have is the usual, the trite, the cliché.

The fact that not Mr. Goldwyn, nor anyone else, has been able to mention one instance where *he'd* done what he was asking us to do apparently had no effect on the author of the nice original screenplay mentioned above. The author took the words to heart, went on iron rations and was creative as hell. He had no illusions about marketing his story to those mass-production picture-factories which are interested in new-slanted carbons of the same stuff they made last year. He showed it to a number of independent producers, all of whom had affirmed a passionate urge to break with the assembly-line methods of the larger studios, efforts they, too, largely blamed on "bad writers."

WHAT happened is touchingly dramatized in the scratchings appended below. A careful reader will catch the pattern: the eager writer is brought face-to-face with the Man of Power. The M. of P. expresses a desire to do something "fine." There is a brief conversational honeymoon. Then, collapse. Despairing, the author of the screenplay, humbly wishing to "improve himself," races to the Bijou, there to sit in rapt attention before the latest product of the gentleman who has just said him nay. My friend, being a man of steel detachment, keeps emotions out of it. He has left us a portrait of the writer as passionate virgin, as rejected mistress, and finally as a kind of literary Stella Dallas standing outside the church while the groom who has spurned her takes his vows with some other dame. There may be a picture in all this. I wouldn't know. But then, you never can tell, as they keep

telling us. Besides, as Mr. Goldwyn can see, every word has been written from the heart with no idea of profit or gain.

The notes began —

Saw AAAAA today. He's a very important agent who seems less interested in handling flesh and more interested in being a producer. Says he's sick and tired of dull, obvious formula pictures. "We'll leave formulas to the majors," he said. "The real talent wants to strike out and do good pictures, work creatively. What's money? The government takes it all away in any case. I want to make pictures that say something, give us a lot of fun and which we can look at without apologizing for." Has heard of my script and appears eager to do, if it lives up to its advance reports.

Well, AAAAA has turned down script. Just felt it wasn't right for him. No hard feelings. Hell. Have been in this business too long for that. Gide turned down Proust. Friede turned down Thomas Wolfe, what the hell. That's what makes horse racing, isn't it? Still, he seemed like fairly capable, sincere guy, so went to see his last picture. No use being bitter, understand. Just wanted chance to learn. Learn the kind of thing he wants to do, since he can't do mine. Following is what I saw:

BATTLE STATIONS

Lieut. (j.g.) Tom Kegley is a brash young fellow, full of ginger and a divvil of a boy-o with the waitresses. Assigned to the grand old flattop "Savin Rock," his comment on first seeing the ship, "What a fat tub of rust," deeply wounded the old Chief, Bill Jones, enlisted Navy through and through. Jones has just said goodbye to his beautiful daughter Elaine and Tom Kegley seeing her
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The Story of The Search

THE theme of *The Search*, which brought to the screen the tragedy of Europe's war orphans, may have originated with a book of photographic studies, *Europe's Children*, made by Therese Bonney. It was filmed as a result of the trip made to the United States in 1945 by Lazar Wechsler, the producer, to arrange distribution for his outstanding film, *The Last Chance*.

Mr. Wechsler was already familiar with the plight of the children. In America he became impressed with two things; the generosity innate in most Americans and their lack of comprehension of the extent of human suffering abroad. He also realized that this lack of comprehension had made Europe suspicious of American generosity. Mr. Wechsler believed that the medium of the motion picture could serve to interpret this problem internationally.

It was obvious that in presenting such a theme, the most important thing was to show the inner truth of the situation and of all characters portrayed. To stop short of this would be inexcusable, for the subject we proposed to deal with involved the plight of tens of thousands of people now living and any misrepresentation or interpretation, however slight, could be very harmful. Therefore, it seemed most important not to approach the subject with any preconceived ideas, for no writer, however conscientious, could sit in an office and try to imagine situations, characters, and psychological processes such as those which existed in this terrible new world of suspended animation: the D.P. Camps. Therefore, it was vital that the story be conceived on the spot.

These children must be seen. They cannot be imagined. Under the pressures of terror and insecurity, they have been so essentially changed psychologically that knowledge of normal childhood, of its motivations and antagonisms, is not only useless but misleading.

So long as it was obviously impossible for the writer and others associated with the making of such a film to experience that terror and insecurity themselves, it became important that they at least come as close to it as possible and that they see at firsthand the results of it.

This unique psychological content presented one problem. The structure of the screen story presented another. The solution of this second problem by the writer, Richard Schweizer, is an outstanding and decisive contribution.

BEFORE I left for Europe I had a long talk with Arthur Loew. At that time we both agreed that it was very important that a film of this kind should be conceived so as to reach the American public at large, and not just those who patronize the art theatres in the few big cities of this country. In order to achieve this, Mr. Loew felt that it was of paramount importance that the dialogue be largely in English, because a film in foreign dialogue and with subtitles would not be acceptable to the general public. This, then, was the only limitation imposed upon us. And to overcome it seemed, at first, almost impossible.

Fortunately, after a few anxious days, Mr. Schweizer arrived at an ingenious solution. He decided to make the story a double one, with the

mother searching for her son and the son searching for his mother. The devices which made the use of English dialogue legitimate were these: in the main story Mr. Schweizer decided to use a boy who had forgotten his language, and like so many of the children, had withdrawn into silence. This child would be picked up by a GI and, as their relationship developed, he would learn to speak English—perhaps even American.

As to the mother's story: the official language in all UNRRA camps in the American and British zone is English; therefore, it was natural that all scenes involving the mother would play in that language.

As soon as Mr. Wechsler, Mr. Schweizer and I had agreed on these two ideas, that of the double search and the means of telling the story in English, a ten page synopsis was written. Mr. Schweizer and I then proceeded to the American zone in Germany.

WE toured the UNRRA camps, paying especial attention to those for "unaccompanied" children. This technical term used to describe boys and girls torn from both parents is typical of the dry phraseology which is psychologically necessary if the pressure of a wall of misery is not to become overwhelming.

The UNRRA personnel, from top men to field workers, were consistently and intelligently helpful. Their organization had hitherto been victims of a "bad press." The general impression was that the UNRRA mainly wasted the taxpayers' money and that it was a front for black market activities besides. Only those who had been on the scene themselves could possibly

by Fred Zinnemann

comprehend the crying need for the UNRRA's work and the enormous difficulties in the way of its accomplishment. Consequently, the UNRRA people welcomed an opportunity to help present the situation as it actually existed.

From the lips of these workers and from the children themselves came the raw stuff from which *The Search* was made. Without drama, without emphasis, these people gave us material sufficient for ten such films. The curious part was that very few of them were concerned with telling us stories of atrocities. Rather, they dwelt—for subconscious reasons, I am sure—on the destruction of human dignity, on the disintegration of the human soul, which had been methodically induced by the Germans. Both the UNRRA people and the D.P.'s seemed a great deal more pre-occupied with that dimension of their experience rather than with simple physical brutality.

THE telling of those stories by the children is a story in itself. Even in 1947, these victims were fearfully suspicious of unfamiliar faces. But neither fear nor suspicion showed on their faces. Like automatons, they sat quietly until told to come forward and answer questions. In answering they spoke rapidly in a continuing monotone. With a shocking sort of quiescence they related their stories.

Here the writer's discrimination and sense of story values expedited our work. Mr. Schweizer selected those incidents which would give flesh and blood to his story skeleton and develop it in the way it must structurally go.

Mr. Schweizer returned to Swit-

zerland and wrote the screen treatment in six weeks, after we had compared notes. Once during that time we returned to Germany not only for additional material but also to "touch base."

Later Paul Jarrico was brought over to Europe in order to give us authentic American dialogue. His contribution was immensely valuable. It transformed the somewhat stilted and literary dialogue into authentic GI speech. In doing so, the dialogue was pulled together and made more economic. After completion of the film, when Mr. Jarrico was asked regarding the type of screen credit he wanted, he suggested modestly and with a nice sense of humor, "Sub-tractional Dialogue."

FROM then on, Mr. Schweizer worked mostly alone, and I went back to Germany to begin casting. Our main problem in casting was to have everyone be authentically of the nationality which he portrayed on the screen; i.e., we wanted Czechs to play Czechs, Americans to be portrayed by Americans, Frenchmen to be French. There is no doubt in my mind that this approach helped tremendously in achieving a sense of authenticity even though it was a difficult method of casting.

The main character to be cast was, of course, the boy. With that problem paramount in our minds, Mr. Schweizer and I had already peered into thousands of young faces in our tour of the camps. However, it took a special trip to Czechoslovakia before we found the child we were looking for. While in Prague, I was advised to look at a group of school children who were to sing on the radio. In that

group we found Karel in the person of Ivan Jandl whose sensitive and serious face was the perfect prototype of all the faces we had seen. Also in Prague, we were able to persuade Jarmila Novotna, the Metropolitan Opera Singer who is herself a Czech, to play the role of the mother. Aline MacMahon and Montgomery Clift had been brought over from New York for the respective roles of the Camp Director and the GI; Wendell Corey, who was to play a military government official, had been obtained in England where he had been appearing on the stage.

The UNRRA carefully selected 600 youngsters for me; from these were winnowed the forty who were in the foreground of the dramatic scenes. There was no need to look for atmosphere. Hundreds of other DP's and children made a living back-drop.

At the risk of being insistent, I should like to say once more that the reactions of these children cannot be imagined. In addition, they cannot be anticipated even by the handful of especially trained, sympathetic UNRRA workers who were so close to them physically.

THE story of the Jewish lad serving as an altar boy for Catholic services illustrates my contention. The incident, which Mr. Schweizer incorporated into the screen treatment, concerns a boy whose last admonition from his mother was "Never tell your name!" Bewildered and frightened but obedient, the child somehow found wisdom beyond his years. When a Christian name was called once, then twice and three times, and there was

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Push Button Marked "Dialogue"

On November 12, 1991, this manuscript, sealed in a bottle, was washed up on the beach at Laguna. The delay in releasing it to the world is due to my desire to be absolutely certain of its authenticity. The following extracts, from a report prepared by the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C., are likely to dispel any doubtss

"... the fact that the manuscript is entirely written on the backs of old popcorn boxes indicates that the author was a close student of the motion pictures produced in the middle years of the 20th Century ... the spelling of such names as Popkin, Fromkess, Zanuck, Tuchok and Kurnitz is certified authentic by our antiquarians ... references to landmarks such as Hollywood Park, Grauman's Chinese, etc., are in keeping with the customs of the period. ..."

THe Thing happened after the fourth race at Hollywood Park, on July 12, 1964. Eyewitness accounts are scarce nowadays and there is obvious hysteria in some of them, but all agree that The Thing happened either just after the fourth race, or just before the fifth.

The tote board had been cleared of the figures compiled on the fourth race and the devotees of racing waited complacently for the great mechanical brain to post the new morning line, opening bids, starting pools. Instead, to the amazement of the crowd, the board flashed:

"FADE IN: LONG SHOT. NEW YORK SKYLINE. EXT. DAY. (STOCK.)"

There were scattered cries of protest and disbelief and thousands of people rushed across the paddocks for a closer look, but by that time the board was already flashing:

"CLOSE SHOT. REVOLVING DOOR. INT. DAY. A beautiful, clean-limbed girl enters."

The first mechanical screenplay was being written. While a deep hush fell over the grandstand and clubhouse the apparatus clicked on steadily and at 11:27 p.m. the board flashed the final "fade-out" on what all agreed was a very satisfactory

career-girl comedy **SHE MARRIED HER OBSTETRICIAN**: a typical, punchy box-office vehicle for Fred MacMurray and Rosalind Russell, with strong comedy parts for a number of character people. At 11:28 the loud-speaker announced Professor Waldemar Trigg, of M.I.T., who had adapted the giant electrical brain of the tote board for this purpose. Professor Trigg spoke briefly and to the point. Scripto, as his machine was called, stood ready to deliver screenplays, original stories and additional dialogue to all the producers of Hollywood. Private demonstrations would commence at 9 a.m. in the Hollywood-Knickerbocker Hotel.

THE next morning a haggard nervous group of producers and writers, especially the latter, gathered in the ballroom of the Hollywood-Knickerbocker Hotel. Professor Trigg stood before a large electric panel, the size of a standard movie screen, and on a couch, in a life-like pose, lay Scripto, the mechanical writer. It was about eight feet tall, or long, with three slender stalks of aluminum for legs. On each metal foot was a two-tone calfskin moccasin, and the lower part of each leg wore Argyle

hose. Above the stalks was a heavy cylindrical copper "torso" from which protruded a thick cable leading to the control "head." The cable was draped in a Charvet tie.

As producers suggested various characters and story needs, Professor Trigg pressed appropriate buttons and the electric panel instantly supplied the situation, dialogue (light or dramatic, as indicated), switch, twist, gimmick and tag. All agreed that it was a very impressive demonstration, and for a finish, Professor Trigg pressed a button marked "Rewrite" and fed into the machine the script of an old, shelved Republic melodrama, which emerged as a Western, complete with cowboy songs and a chase.

SCRIPTO made heavy inroads right from the start and hundreds of screenwriters were dismissed from their jobs. Some studios, fearful of the new invention, clung to a part of their writing staffs, but that year the Academy Award for the best-written screenplay went to Westinghouse Electric; the best original story was by the Roebling Bridge Company of Trenton, N. J., and the best original screenplay by Youngstown Sheet and

by Harry Kurnitz

Tube, with additional dialogue by The Worthington Pump Company. The next day, the panic was on.

In the year that followed the screenwriter was completely eliminated from the Hollywood studios, except for a few who were kept on as oilers and mechanics. Production and profits in the studios touched all-time peaks and writer-producer relations were never as happy or as congenial. The Thomas Committee, which in 1953 had opened a thirty-story skyscraper headquarters in Hollywood was able to lease out three floors to a dry-cleaning firm, now that the writers no longer took so much of its time. To be sure, the machine, being only inhuman, had some failings, but they were for the most part negligible. Disgruntled writers for a time committed minor acts of sabotage against the machine, but Professor Trigg was prepared for just such contingencies with an auxiliary brain connected to a switchboard in the office of the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, which apprehended and dealt summarily with the offenders.

IN 1972, Stark Raving, the last screenwriter left in Hollywood, committed suicide by jumping into the dialogue mixer at Universal-International. Only two inches of tortoise-shell from Raving's spectacles were recovered from the giant hopper and the next day, when this relic was interred at Forest Lawn, only six people showed up. A simple marker, in the form of a marble

pencil poised over a pad of limestone, was soon obliterated and that was the last trace of any writer.

In 1973 every single picture produced in Hollywood was written by the machines and institutional industry advertising featured the slogan, "UNTOUCHED BY HUMAN HANDS." Ten engineering concerns, licensed by Professor Trigg, were now in the field, and the original design by Scripto was much improved. There were dozens of brightly-colored plastic knobs and dials which a producer could twirl to his heart's content without affecting the quality of the output, and there was a de-luxe model, at slightly higher cost, which could write forewords and dedications. There was also a special model, called "Gaggo," for comedy routines and other such specialized functions, and another called "Slicko," exclusively for polishing.

It is interesting to note that no machine was ever invented which could duplicate the functions of the producers and directors.

NOVEMBER, 1973 became a historic date in the new era. That was the day when Oliver Stritch, an M.G.M. producer became dissatisfied with the screenplay of "Kiss That Goal," a college picture being written by one of the machines, and added a second machine to the assignment in the first mechanical collaboration. The dual effort was a huge success and Stritch was hailed as a genius, praise which he modestly disclaimed, giving all the credit to his executive producer. The script produced by the two machines had punch, wit,

action, everything, and the picture which resulted from it grossed huge sums.

To be sure, neither machine functioned very well for a time, and Professor Trigg, in an emergency overhaul, determined that they were dissatisfied with the joint-screenplay credit. He warned the producing companies against mechanical collaborations but his warnings were ignored, and joint efforts of two, three and as many as five machines were produced in that year. Designation of credit was invariably followed by minor work stoppage, slowdowns and curious mechanical breakdowns. Again over Professor Trigg's vehement protests the studios held credit arbitrations in certain disputes and for a time this seemed to ease the situation.

IN the Spring of the following year, however, one of the machines at 20th Century-Fox, to the horror of the studio staff, suddenly flashed its signature to a petition urging better treatment of racial minorities and when the offending device was hastily removed, four other machines got up another petition of protest. A congressional inquiry revealed no signs of sabotage, or "jamming" by any foreign power, but one machine, despite Professor Trigg's frantic manipulation of its controls, denied the right of the committee to inquire into its private (or short-wave) beliefs. Professor Trigg, in a desperate effort to stem the tide of outraged editorial opinion, demolished the machine in a public ceremony at the base of the Washington Monument.

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SCREEN WRITERS' GUILD, INC.

1655 NO. CHEROKEE AVE., HOLLYWOOD 28, CALIFORNIA
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E D I T O R I A L

WITH the box office suffering from summer complaint, the trade papers are once again interviewing everyone from Avak to J. Arthur Rank to find the reason.

The answer is always the same — bad pictures, and then somewhere near the bottom the sage being questioned always remarks that the inferior product is due to inferior story material. (Strangely enough, good pictures are always due to superb production, outstanding direction and magnificent acting — but that's something else again.) But for the sake of this discussion let the writers accept the responsibility for the present scarcity of patrons in the candy stores now showing motion pictures.

How will the producers go about obtaining better material? They'll try the same idea that has proved unsuccessful for many years. They'll hold contests. They'll hold dozens of them and give away close to a million dollars in prizes. There'll be one contest (which has been in existence for some time) sponsored by 20th Century-Fox in conjunction with Farrar, Straus and Co. and open only to "employees of newspapers or magazines in the United States and Canada." There'll be another held by Columbia for "members of the United Nations' Armed Forces." There will be several for college English students and at least one for the housewives of Passaic, New Jersey — but there won't be one for screen writers. From where we sit this seems very much like holding the national Open Golf Championships but barring anyone who can break ninety.

Along about Christmas the prize winning stories will find their way to the desks of the Hollywood studios and then the frantic cries of "help" will be heard. Professional screen writers will be engaged with the familiar greeting, "You'll have to start from scratch—there's no picture in it." And so they'll go to work making bricks without straw.

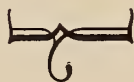
If the screen writer is sufficiently inventive to turn out a satisfactory story based on a title, he is equally capable of creating the same story with his own title.

Why then are there no story contests for SWG members? The producers give two reasons, the first being that contests held outside of the industry create public interest. The winning story is presold. This may be true — but it's also true that the studio publicity departments can sell the public almost anything. How many times have they taken some starlet and convinced moviegoers that behind her well upholstered sweater lies a talent greater than Duse's? If they can accomplish this, they can certainly make any winning story sound better than Hamlet. Their second reason — original stories are acceptable for B's and Westerns but not good enough for expensive productions with important personalities. These pictures require "big properties."

What about *Going My Way*, *House On 92nd Street*, *Bells of St. Mary's*, *Boomerang*, *Miracle On 34th Street*, *Bachelor and the Bobby Soxer*, *Double Life* and the current *Street With No Name*? Nothing small and unimportant about those. Originals, every one of them — written by screen writers directly for the screen.

Who knows, maybe some day one of the studios will go over the books and realize that stories written expressly for the medium pay off. However, until that time, if you have a motion picture story you think might be worth a prize may we suggest a method? Send it to your brother who lives in Joplin, Missouri. He may know of a family in Connecticut who has a son attending a prep school in New Hampshire. Let this lad put his name on it and sit tight. Perhaps at the moment there isn't a story contest on for school-boys — but don't be impatient. Let the lobby popcorn sales fall off a few more percentage points and there will be. When that happens perhaps we can also expect a story contest in which screen writers will be eligible to compete. There's hope at least—your board is working on it.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD



Julian Johnson

(Continued from Page 4)

what's coming to them and the good people achieve happiness, love and success. I have tried to keep away from that formula in *Intolerance*. I am not sure that I was right from a showmanship standpoint, but the picture represents something I have wanted to say for a long time . . . and I had to say it."

Intolerance, if I remember correctly, won marvelous notices, but was never a great box-office smash, though I believe it did pay off, when all the returns were in. But, in my opinion, it has never been equalled for sweeping and magnificent imagination, or for subtle indictment of men down through history in their greatest failing of "not being able to put up with each other."

Intolerance was far far ahead of its time. The cinema audience was not yet ready for an epic. But how prophetic were D. W.'s words! Less and less have people been "putting up" with each other until today the whole world is at swords' points.

The prophet is dead but his words live.

Julian Johnson, former editor and screen writer, is head of the story department at Twentieth Century-Fox.

MAE MARSH

MR. GRIFFITH was always solicitous about what we called *The Birth of a Nation* family; proud when many of us went on to individual successes; sad when others were beset by misfortune.

In the latter cases he preferred his help always to be anonymous. I recall that one of the women in the cast later was in financial straits. When D.W. heard of it he came to me and gave me a one hundred dollar bill to send to this player whose pride was high.

"Why don't you send it to her?" I asked.

"No," he replied, "just tell her you sold a screen story, the inspiration for which you got from her nobler quali-

ties, and that you consider the \$100 as payment for the inspiration."

In those days screen stories didn't bring what they do now.

Imagine our surprise during *The Birth of a Nation* when Mr. Griffith called us in and said we were to report to Western Costume Company, then new, for fittings.

Up to that time we had always made our own costumes at home. And it was at home that we did our hair and put on our make-up, too.

It was after *The Birth* that D.W. feared he was going to become bald. He read somewhere that shaving the head would eventually bring in new hair, so he shaved his head.

Mrs. Gish, Lillian and I were standing outside Clune's Auditorium with Mr. Griffith where *The Clansman*, as *The Birth* was first called, was playing. We were trying to catch the comments of those who had just seen it.

This was about the time of the Herman Rosenthal murder in New York when "Gyp the Blood" and "Lefty Louie," New York gunmen, were much in newspaper pictures and headlines. The Los Angeles *Times* had just run a picture of "Gyp the Blood" who also wore his hair clipped.

"Look!" said a movie-goer to his girl friend as he jerked his thumb toward D.W. "It's Gyp the Blood!"

The next spring a great many of the directors in Hollywood were shaving their heads.

I have been asked if, when Mr. Griffith was shooting *The Birth*, we knew it was to be epochal. Speaking for myself, I don't think so. I think most of us thought it was just a longer and more expensive picture and we were hoping for the best.

What we did know was that Mr. Griffith was having extreme difficulties getting the money to keep shooting. He was very pessimistic about "those bankers" and said they were "driving him crazy!"

Some years later I came to know former United States Senator and Mrs. Frank P. Flint very well. Mr. Flint had represented the interests that had loaned D.W. some of the money for *The Birth*.

"That man Griffith," said the

Senator reminiscently, "you know, he almost drove us crazy!"

Griffith gave Mae Marsh her start in motion pictures in *The Birth of a Nation* and later presented her in *The White Rose*

SEENA OWEN

DW.'s reputation as an innovator and a complete perfectionist is well known. The close-up, the flashback, dozens of techniques and methods that are commonplace in film-making today were all developed under his sure touch. Even the false eye-lashes without which no actress would appear on the screen today was D.W.'s inspiration when we were making *Intolerance*—a lavish extravaganza laid in the Babylonian Court of Belshazzar. I was playing the king's favorite, the "Princess Beloved"; and every detail of my costume had been checked and re-checked until it was a model of authenticity. Even the make-up had been devised so as to conform perfectly to the reference book's description of the Babylonian maid. In consequence, I had a large putty nose, a wig of heavy black curls and wide, well-defined cheekbones. Just before the first day's shooting, when I was all ready for the cameras, D.W. looked over my costume with a critical eye. Something wasn't quite right — but he couldn't decide what it was. Suddenly then, it came to him.

"Your eyes—they're lost with that heavy hair and big nose. We've got to do something to bring them out. Long lashes would do it."

And so the wig-maker was called over and the problem presented to him. Long false eyelashes that could be heavily mascared were needed. He nodded and set to work. He wove human hair through the warp of the thinnest kind of gauze in a strip two feet long. Then he cut off two tiny pieces from the ends and fastened them to my eyelids with spirit gum. Each day as I needed them, I would cut off two more small strips from the long piece of gauze. And those were the first false eyelashes. D.W. was pleased; his passion for authen-



9370 Santa Monica Boulevard
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ticity had been satisfied, but even more, the proportions of my face were balanced again.

Just as there are certain qualities I shall always associate with D.W., so a certain sound will always recall him to mind—the jingle of silver dollars clinking against one another. He carried a pocketful of silver dollars with him always and had the habit of stacking them in his hand and then riffling the stack from one hand to another, constantly. The rare moments when that sound was not heard were those when his attention was completely absorbed. When an actor failed to hear the jingling of the silver dollars as he was doing a scene, he knew that he was doing a very special job indeed. The silence was his reward. It was the accolade. And I doubt that any of us ever heard that silence more than half a dozen times in all our careers with Griffith.

D.W. was a man who thought in big and exciting sweeps of imagination—but worked through the drudg-

ery of detail to perfection. And just as Jimmy Walker was Mr. New York—the beloved symbol of cosmopolitanism—so D. W. Griffith will always be Mr. Hollywood, the symbol of perfect craftsmanship, and showmanship. And as a person, he was one of the few of whom one could truly say, “there was a great man.”

Seena Owen, who came to motion pictures as an actress, has long been a screen writer and a member of SWG

MARY PICKFORD

WHEN I first climbed the brownstone steps of the old Biograph studio at 11 East Fourteenth Street in New York to apply for a job as an actress, I did so only because of the extreme leanness of the Pickford purse. I had been on the stage since the age of five, and for the past two years had been appearing on Broadway under the management of the great David Belasco. But theatrical engagements were impossible to obtain during the

long summer months. If Mother, Lottie, Jack and I were to survive it was up to me to seek work in the despised “flickers.”

At the desk of the Biograph studio, I asked to see the manager. The clerk was rude. Angrily I turned to go. In the room was a tall man with amazing eyes and sharp features. He stared at me and as I moved to leave he grasped my arm. I shook myself free, and with the know-it-all assurance of a fifteen year old, I started giving him a piece of my mind, clearly stating my opinion of the shabby movies and the uncouth people who worked for them.

To my surprise, the man began answering my criticisms reasonably and gently.

He explained that in the first plays, actors hadn't been ashamed of playing in barns, being jeered at by crowds as they tramped from town to town. From the humblest beginnings, the theater had grown up to hold its own with the other arts. The movies, he assured me, would blaze the same

path. The Biograph stage might be an erstwhile piano warehouse, its theaters converted shops, and its players small-time actors come to pick up five dollars a day. But the movies would develop. They, too, would find a place for themselves among the arts. The movies only needed people with the right faith, the right ideals.

When he finished talking, I had caught some of the man's faith and ideals. He converted me to films by his belief, just as his pictures were to convert people by the millions throughout the world. I signed a contract with him. The man was David Wark Griffith, the person who was to contribute most to the development of the cinema. There are those who revere David Wark Griffith because he created the blueprint of the feature length motion picture as we know it today.

To the men and women who were fortunate enough to work with him, he will always be cherished as the man who produced and directed great motion pictures straight from the heart.

He was an idealist who firmly believed that films could be as important an art as painting, sculpture, architecture and music. A flame of perfectionism burned within him, and made him refuse to accept the second-rate from himself or his co-workers. A poet who sang his song in celluloid, he was the first to break down the militant prejudices against the motion picture and motion picture makers when films were young. He had visions of great accomplishments for the medium, and he imparted his faith to others.

MACK SENNETT

I first worked for D.W. as a comedian—some people might say a “so-called comedian”—at the old Biograph Studios in New York. Those were the days when an actor who could chew the scenery never starved. D.W. liked actors but he liked them natural and to behave like real people in a picture.

One day I was in a scene that he was directing. It was a dramatic part

—we comedians could be versatile then—but I did nothing, no acting in the usual sense. At the end of the take, D.W. came over and said to me, “That was great.”

“But I didn’t do anything,” I said.

“That’s why you were great,” he smiled. “You were perfectly natural. If I can make actors look like human beings on the screen, we’ll make great pictures.”

Another time, he had me cast in a comic role. When lunch was called, I asked him if I could get a funny hat from wardrobe. He thought it might be a good idea, but he wanted to see the hat I’d worn to work that morning. I showed him my fine black derby and put it on for him.

“That’s the hat,” he said. “It’s just right for the scene. Wear it.”

“But the cop breaks it in the scene!” I said.

Despite all my protests, I had to wear that derby—and it was ruined. The studio gave me a new one but I never had a hat since that I was so fond of. It was my *first* derby and I guess I wore it like one and D.W.’s shrewd eye detected the fact. That’s what he wanted in the scene.

Later on, D.W. made me a comedy director and it was under him that I developed the wild and woolly, knock-’em-down and drag-’em-out comedies. Our money men also sat on the board of Baldwin Locomotive, a stuffy, snooty lot who disapproved of “the Sennett style of fun.” They were shocked when I’d tumble a lady into a ditch of water. They wanted Griffith to fire me but he refused, saying, “We are making entertainment for the whole world, and if the world laughs at it, it’s good entertainment.”

I never started a picture until I’d consulted with him because he had a wonderful story mind. I was a young kid then, full of gags, but I had to learn how to use a gag properly. D.W. taught me all that, particularly how to fit the gag to the story line, how to motivate it so that it wasn’t just dragged in.

He was a great judge of people and personalities, too. When he was casting, he’d call a group of actors

together and study them for just the right person to fill the part. Often, he’d pick some unknown because he or she would look more authentic as a person than a trained actor who had developed mannerisms.

At that time, extras were paid very little. If D.W. heard one of them was hard up, he’d start talking about a part that hadn’t existed until that moment, how well that extra fitted it, and then cast him for it. Actors, extras and all the little guys in the crew loved him for his kindness and consideration.

His story for a picture usually consisted of one or two typed sheets of paper—the outlines of the theme and the motivations for the main situations; the rest of the story came out of his head as he directed the scenes. No one ever knew what the continuity would be before rehearsals. Scenes were rehearsed over and over with their action worked out as he went along. You can’t do that today because it keeps the front office out of the act.

He’d consult cast and crew, asking for suggestions—for reactions from other eyes that were watching. He wanted to be sure that pictures and visual business were telling the story he was making. Luncheon for a good idea was his method of paying off and he never failed to credit the originator of the suggestion or piece of business.

Can you blame us old timers for loving him? He was a wonderful character.

Mack Sennett, whose comedies are motion picture history, became Griffith's partner in 1915 in Triangle Pictures.

Pradit Prabang

(Continued from Inside Front Cover)

Prajadhipok is the withdrawn film, the story of our recent king who once visited your country. Politics, I presume. It may be replaced by *Khao Thailand*, but that title has already been changed to *Khao Siam* since the decree of Rama VI has been changed and Thailand is once more Siam which is much relief to those of us who have to spell it.

Pradit Prabang, author of the celebrated sea story, Krat, is one of Siam's outstanding screen writers.

Leonard Spigelgass

(Continued from Page 5)

"But you've got a mind like one," said Mr. Gort, in a voice that was a shade too hearty.

"Well," said Miss Lind. "Why does she *have* to murder him. Don't say anything yet. Why can't she *think* she's murdered him? Look what it does. You keep everything, except the scene in the amusement park. Instead of that, you play back, with a narrator's voice, somebody like Basil Rathbone, you know, pear-shaped like conscience, the story of the torture of a woman who's believed a lie, a study in self-delusion, you know, just like Mr. Gort wants, psychological."

"I would like it," said Mr. Gort. "I would like it because it gives dimension, gimmick, suspense, an alpha you can get your teeth into."

"I want to think about it," said Mr. Brady. "How does it strike you, Mr. Clews?"

Mr. Clews did not hear the question. He was weighing the author of a Goncourt Prize novel against Miss Lind. He was remembering that Brady got Gort only if he got Lind, and Burke only if he got Gort, and, unless he got Lind and Burke, how could Brady put two million dollars in a picture that said something, unless he got Lind and Burke who could carry it. He was remembering

the satisfaction, the simple writer satisfaction of having turned out a script that he thought good, better than good, for the first time since the war. He was turning over in his mind the fact that Brady had given in on every story point, that even Gort had been fairly reasonable for a director, that the bulk of the meaning and the content were still there, that only what had been a meadow had become an ice house, that without Lind there would be no picture, no credit, and he said, "Miss Lind, it's another picture. Perhaps a good one even, but another one. This is not simply the story of a woman who kills a man. It's the story of a woman who beats out against war and destruction. That's what the author meant. And that's what I tried to keep. In this you kill, not for yourself, but for Lidice, not for your own soul, but for the souls of those in the gas chambers at Auschwitz, not for your own heart, but for the hearts of those bereft and alone. And that . . ." and as he said it, he had shame, "and that's *you*."

Miss Lind closed her eyes. "Yes," she said, "that *is* me." She turned to Mr. Brady and Mr. Gort. "We'll think about it, won't we?"

"Yes," said Mr. Brady.

"Yes," said Mr. Gort.

"It's dreadfully close in here," said Miss Lind.

Mr. Clews opened the window,

and looked out at the lot, and saw the hills and the sky and a friend of his pacing, waiting for a conference, and inside him he knew that what was once a meadow had become an ice house, and he suddenly knew for certain that what once had been the story of a woman who had killed for Lidice would become the story of a woman with shell nails, and he wanted to cry.

Valentine Davies

(Continued from Page 1)

all writers should understand that it is to their own interest to demand a billing clause when they license or sell material to a studio, and the Guild urges them to do so.

While the size of this magazine does not permit the required 2½ inch type, proper billing should nevertheless be given to Mary McCall, Chairman of the Guild's Negotiating Committee, and the other members who labored long months to complete these negotiations. Alice Penneman and Morris Cohn are also entitled to Negotiating Credits.

If you don't like the results of their efforts—if you have any beefs or ideas, it is fortunately not too late. Write the Guild office and let us know. The entire Basic Agreement will be re-negotiated next year. Now is the time to send in your complaints, suggestions and changes. Don't wait until 1950!

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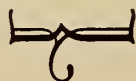
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Grievances and Good Standing

A number of grievances have been filed recently by members who are not in good standing in the Guild. By direction of the Executive Board members are advised that the Grievance Committee will not consider the individual financial claims of any members who are not in good standing at the time the grievance is filed. If, however, the working status of any member in good standing is jeopardized by a case reported, the Executive Board will investigate the case in the interest of Guild members generally.

It is important in this connection that all writers be familiar and comply with the Guild's Code of Working Rules which is:

1. Each member shall without delay report his employment to the Guild Studio Committee at his studio.
2. Each member shall promptly file with the Guild office a copy of his employment contract.
3. Each member shall report to the Guild any screen credits and any change in employment status such as:
 - (a) When the employer takes up or fails to take up the member's option.
 - (b) If after a term contract the member continues to work on a week to week basis.
 - (c) When a member starts or terminates any employment, including flat deals.
 - (d) If a member becomes a producer, director, or executive,
- or is given any control over hiring and firing writers, and upon the termination of any such status.
- (e) Any change affecting classification for minimum salary or membership status in the Guild.
4. Each member upon being assigned to a story is required to ascertain from the proper authorities in the studio the name or names of any other writers assigned to the story. It will be the obligation of a member to *notify the other writer or writers* on the story of the fact that he has been assigned to it. Failure to carry out this obligation will subject a member to disciplinary action. In addition, a member shall notify the *Guild Studio Chairman* of his assignment.
5. Each member shall comply with the terms of the Minimum Basic Agreement in spirit as well as in letter.
6. Members shall submit disputes and protests concerning screen credits to arbitration by the Guild; cooperate with the Arbitration Committee and facilitate a speedy and just disposition of such disputes; send in material and appear on request of the Committee, and accept and abide by decisions of the Committee.
7. No member shall work on speculation or under any arrangement in which payment is contingent upon approval or submit ideas in writing without compensation or written arrangements therefor. Members may, however, submit original stories and discuss their thoughts and reactions regarding material owned by the Producer.
8. A member shall not accept any employment, sign any contract, or make any arrangement for employment which violates the Minimum Basic Agreement, regardless of whether or not the employer has signed the Agreement.
9. No member shall accept credit which misrepresents the member's contribution to a picture as finally filmed.
10. No member shall advertise his achievements or credits, or pay for advertising for the purpose of publicizing himself, his work or any award. This does not prohibit the use of the writer's name on space purchased for charity, without mention of credits or authorship.
11. No member shall submit for sale any work which contains situations, characters or ideas which are the property of other persons.
12. No member shall participate, either as employer or employee, in any arrangement for ghost writing.
13. No writer may sign a contract which does not include a provision that the terms of the Minimum Basic Agreement shall be incorporated in the contract.



Screen Writers' Guild Studio Chairmen (August 1, 1948)

Columbia — Louella Macfarlane.

MGM — Anne Chapin; Studio Committee: Sonya Levien, Joseph Ansen, Robert Nathan, George Wells.

Paramount — Richard Breen.

Republic — Sloan Nibley; alternate, Patrick Ford.

RKO — Daniel Mainwaring; alternate, Martin Rackin.

Fox — Richard Murphy; alternate, Wanda Tuchock.

Universal-International — Dane Lussier.

Warner Brothers — Henry Ephron; alternate, Harriet Frank.

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C R e s t v i e w 6 - 1 0 7 1

Group Insurance Report

SIX members of the Guild have had occasion to file claims under the group insurance policy since its establishment a little over two months ago.

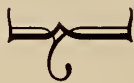
Richard English, who broke his arm playing baseball, filed the first claim and received the first check issued by the National Casualty Company of Detroit. Frank Davis, Wells Root, and Lamar Trotti were hospitalized by illness, and Lionel Houser has been confined at home. Karl Tunberg was injured in an automobile accident.

Members are reminded that payment of compensation is available immediately in cases of accident or hospitalization and beginning with the eighth day of illness. Claims that are filed at once will be paid during the time that you are incapacitated.

Numerous members of the Guild have expressed interest in the extension of our policy to cover their families as well as themselves. To meet this demand, the insurance company has developed a new provision under which dependents in the immediate families of members can be insured at an added semi-annual premium of \$14.00. Under this arrangement, wives, husbands, and dependent children can qualify for the same hospitalization indemnities as members.

To put this into effect, 75% of those now insured will be required to subscribe. The Board feels that the provision is decidedly advantageous and will shortly circularize the membership concerning it.

PAUL GANGELIN



Lionel Houser

(Continued from Page 7)

is because nobody could write as much as one needs to—especially on a rewrite desk—and retain any of that precious and essential zest for the search for exactly the right word or phrase to fit a particular emotion, as filtered through the writer, which genuine writing requires. Men on rewrite regularly grind out thirty to forty pages, sometimes more, on an evening paper, in a single day. Most of the stories except for the names are duplicates of ones they have done a thousand times before. While it is true that no two events are ever alike, there is nonetheless a great similarity between one court hearing and another, one July 4th parade and another, one city council meeting and another. But that is no reason why the stories should be the same; the differences do exist.

Years of work on a newspaper accustom a man to functioning in the

midst of a clattering crowd of people, typewriters and phones. When he tries to work alone, as he must to create anything good, the natural difficulties of this lonely, hard experience are greatly aggravated because he has become so used to working in the middle of a group. It is after all only normal to like to be with other people and to commune with them in work, and it has always been a hard lesson for the writer to learn to function successfully in a daily routine of utter alone-ness; but he must, of course. The newspaperman gets so used to leaning on the group-function that he cannot do without when it comes time to write something of his own, because he has added habit to the basic dislike of working alone which he would have to combat anyway; the double burden is too heavy to bear.

It seems to me that a man would be better off to work at a Safeway grocery, drive a cab, clerk in a hotel, teach school, cut film or almost any-

thing in the world than work on a newspaper if he thought he had the talent to write pictures, plays or novels, and had, meantime, to earn his living. He would be more than likely never to find out whether he could write anything or not, if he went on a paper. I think I saw in my city room days a great many men who had the gifts to accomplish good things and who would have done so had they not gotten into the newspaper quicksands.

FOR some reason I have never fathomed, newspapers never let reporters quote people as they really talk. Nobody ever actually speaks in the stilted language which you see framed in quotation marks in every newspaper. Partly this is the reporter's fault and, in turn, the fault of the way he learns his trade; customarily he jots down rough phrases and then, when writing the story, uses his own words to expand the notes into full sentences. However, it is true that if he did put it down exactly as spoken

(which might have taught the writer something and bettered the paper), it would be cut out, rewritten or tossed back at him. You never see dialogue in newspapers the way the people speak it. And of course one result of this is that, when they essay to do a picture or a novel, newspapermen rarely know how to write dialogue; they hardly ever have any ear for it because any natural talent has already been corrupted by the stupid practices of practically every city room in the country. When people talk they say "er" and "uh" and make grammatical errors and get wound up in sentences that run into others and never finish; they say salty, odd, twisted phrases, they sprinkle in curses, they leap from topic to topic within sentences. The reporter hears them talk this way, but it is not the way they talk in the stories he writes for the paper. There they all sound the same—the tired phrases like political oratory, all neatly rounded. They convert human speech into a stiff, unreal tasteless pap. I have digressed a little here and I may as well carry it through and add that the newspapers which so freely and often criticize motion pictures for clichés in dialogue and story had better take a look at themselves and the lazy, threadbare, cliché-ridden prose which they serve up to their own customers.

But my point here is that this kind

of training can obviously be fatal to the writer whose need will be later to set down human speech as if it were spoken by live people. After all, you tell all your play in dialogue, and a goodly part of your screenplay, and you ought to have an acute ear for living speech—which you can not have after years of writing what passes for human talk in the newspapers.

THE enormous success of *Time* and *Life* is in part attributable to the tasteless sawdust writing and lethargy of the newspapers; these magazines, unhampered by the old hacks, old ideas, and inertia that rule most newspapers, write freshly, and quote people at least partly the way they actually speak. They cover news and write it with a different outlook. However, they, too, are brutally stylized and more than a short term on them would also stultify genuine talent.

I think the few competent screenwriters and dramatists who once worked on newspapers had a harder road than if they had not done so, and that their brilliance now is in spite of their newspaper experience and never even remotely because of it. And I think any young man who is drawn to the over-rated trade of newspapering as a possible stepping stone to dramatic writing should be

warned to avoid it at any cost. It is likely to kill his talent.

Kenneth Macgowan

(Continued from Page 10)

contribution, not only to the students who study these arts, but also to those who come in contact with its products—its plays, its films, its radio work.

Too often the teacher and the administrator think and talk of a university's aim as "teaching a man to think." That is a fine aim, a necessary aim; but it is also important to teach a man to feel, to feel finely and fully and also critically. Thinking, except in some special fields, is not divorced from feeling. We may behave as though it were, but by so much we are debasing thinking and adding to the friction of life. It is difficult to think except on the basis of feeling; the man who has learned to feel and who knows how to help others to feel makes a contribution to the kind of consciousness of life out of which healthful, personal and social relationships may grow. That, too, is education.

Kenneth Macgowan, author, critic, stage and motion picture producer, is now chairman of the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of California at Los Angeles.

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EST.  1898

David Chandler

(Continued from Page 11)

struggle with an armful of bundles, leaves his foot in the aisle so she trips over it. Elaine is livid, but it is clearly a case of love at first sight, even though she pretends to be so furious that she says she hopes she never sees him again. Later, Kegley, reporting for duty, meets the ship's Exec, Commander Jim Murphy, a swell guy, homely as a matinee idol with drooping dewlaps, but pure gold all the way through. The two men fail to hit it off. Kegley doesn't know that Murphy is sort of engaged to Elaine and when he makes a disparaging remark about the grand old "Savin Rock," he makes an enemy of Murphy. That evening Kegley calls on Elaine; she is in the midst of telling him that she would not go out with him for all the tea in China when in walks Murphy and Tom says

BBBBB very hot for my script. Has read and raved. His signature all we need to go into production. Is big star and will produce all own pictures from here on out. "I can't go on forever being a bobby-soxer's idol," he says. "This is just what I want. A characterization, a real part to sink my teeth in."

BBBBB has backed out. Called me after midnight to say he's afraid he's unsuited for part. While he deplores star system, he feels trapped by it and wonders whether audiences would accept him as my leading character. I told him I'd always regarded him as a genuine actor, not a painted doll, and felt he could do anything. (He was very grateful for this.) I said I'd be willing to tailor part a little for him. No go. He says he'll have to make another like his last one, which, he says, is cleaning up. Went to see it today to find out where I'd missed:

PORT OF SIN

It's touch and go for Dr. Hugo Cranstenpfeffer, atomic scientist, displaced person, mighty intellect and implacable enemy of the still-surviving remnants of the Gestapo, headed by the sardonic Herr Gusspimpel. Hugo

lives by his wits in war-shattered Italy, fissioning atoms for whoever will pay for a crummy bed in the crummier fleabag he calls home and for whoever will keep him in Necco wafers, for which he has an unquenchable compulsion. Love is a joke for Hugo. Life is a bitter joke too. "Ethics is for dreamers," he says wearily. He always says things like that. One day he is offered everything, money, a passport to America if he will just explain a certain formula to a certain party and ask no questions. He suspects the wily Herr Gusspimpel, but his supply of Necco wafers is running low. What to do? He walks in the rain. He meets—*Her*. She won't say her name, she hates men, she hates love. "Ethics?" She shrugs her beautiful shoulders. "Ethics is for dreamers." It is a case of love at first sight, but she confesses she is trapped, lost; a certain fat black marketeer name of Gusspimpel wants her to

CCCC is practically set. Loves story, structure and people in it. Only has to confer with end-money men. "Where have you been all my life? Writer-producer-director teams are the Big Trend," he says. "Are we lucky to meet!" In solid. Wants to know if I've ever considered directing. He says he likes this one because it has substance, is off-beat and can be a picture he'd be proud of making. "I'm sick of making pictures that outgross everybody's and are really nothing at all. I want to show this town I'm not just a commercial guy."

Here we go again. Deal off. Business very bad. Taxes. British. Was very man to man. Wishes I could write stuff he usually turns out but has "a boy who can write that kind of stuff sleeping." Thinks better play safe for time being. But, mind, keeps insisting I've done a splendid job. Too bad I'm too good for his kind of thing. Agrees with Goldwyn on how writers have responsibility to improve product, but adds: "I ain't Goldwyn. Try Sam." Anyway, took in CCCCC's latest opus last night. Herewith honest synopsis, far as I got:

PALISADES PARK

Joe Loco runs the biggest saloon

at the Park back in the Nineties. He's trying to brush off Fifi, a busty blonde who's been his big attraction for years in favor of a sweet young kid, Kathy, who sings like a million bucks and makes Fifi look as plain as a 1938 Chevrolet business coupe. But the kid is in love with a down-at-heels composer who's got a song called *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes* which no one wants to hear, let alone publish. Joe is wild for Kathy; he puts it up to her straight. If she wants Paul's song published (Paul walks in here, overhears enough to incriminate Kathy and beats a hasty retreat before he can hear anything more), if she really wants to be good to Paul, then she's got to let Joe

There are more jottings in this vein. But the whole thing ends quite abruptly.

Anybody regarding them as an inducement to purchase the scratch-paper script mentioned earlier, should be warned that these jottings are on poor quality stuff, apparently ripped from a schoolboy's nickel pad. There may be a picture in all this and, if so, as the departed guy's literary executor, all I ask is that no one tell me about it. I have troubles enough of my own.

Harry Kurnitz

(Continued from Page 15)

One week later, a tall, stoop-shouldered man named Oliver Wadsworth Venable got off the Super-Space Limited at Burbank and asked the way to the Paramount Studio. An alert reporter interviewed Venable and the studio shame-facedly admitted that it had hired a writer. Only, it assured the public, as an experiment. Later that day, Lancelot Drimmel, the New York playwright, was located at R.K.O. adapting one of his own works for the screen. Venable and Drimmel inevitably met at a dinner party in their first week in Hollywood and over the coffee one of them murmured, "Say, why wouldn't it be a good idea for us to form a Guild? . . ."

On Credit

By

EDWARD ELISCU

A director of the Screen Writers' Federal Credit Union does not merely decorate the left side of the imaginary stationery. In addition to Attending Meetings, Carrying Out Policy, Building Up the Organization, and (in the future) Recommending the Declaration of Dividends, he is likely to be assigned to Miscellaneous Responsibilities. Prexy Partos tossed me this month's report simply on the grounds that at the first meeting I almost had been elected treasurer.

The headline of this bulletin could read sensationally:

SWFCU UP 150%

Between the parentheses you would learn that the number of members had increased from 40 in June to 74 in late July.

The shares at this writing amount to \$5,144.75.

Ten loans have been made, ranging from two hundred to four hundred and fifty dollars. The first three payments on all have come in on time.

The by-laws authorize the granting of loans "for provident or productive purposes."

That covered all the requests . . . the fellow who had a story in the typewriter which he couldn't finish because the figures kept getting in the way of the letters . . . the writer with a job on the fire that was slower to come to the boiling point than he had anticipated . . . the one who was tiding himself over while promoting an independent writer-producer setup, and who offered objets d'art as collateral though none was required . . . and the one who was writing a book and insisted upon putting up the pink slip on his car though assured it was unnecessary.

No requests for loans have been refused.

The credit committee's standards and functions are impersonal, and are clearly defined in the bylaws which govern the thousands of credit unions under the supervision of the government's Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The credit committee does not ask the plot of anyone's projected original screenplay nor judge his in with agents nor his out with producers. If you're a shareholder you're

entitled to a loan as long as you seem to understand you've got to repay it—with less interest than if you'd borrowed the money elsewhere.

The plan goes beyond the immediate needs of screenwriters who must tilt lances regularly with the First of the Month Men.

You may have an idea for which you need financing—like putting in plumbing at last—or going back to college—or fortifying your study with stout Proustian walls to shut out the wails from the nursery.

Or, with an eye on the future, you may buy shares (in their names) for your five year old son and your eight year old daughter, and add to it steadily, so that by the time they become teledrinoscreenwriters they can afford to hold out with their colleagues for a better percentage deal.

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Book and Drama Notes

STEPHEN LONGSTREET, author of *Stallion Road*, is bringing out a new novel, *The Crystal Girl*, under Julian Messner's imprint. It is set against a post-war Paris and Riviera background. His musical, *High Button Shoes*, is still a hit at the Shubert Theatre in New York.

C. S. Forester, creator of the immortal Horatio Hornblower, has had his new novel, *The Sky and The Forest*, selected as the Book of the Month Club's chief offering for August. Little, Brown & Co., are the publishers.

McElligott's Pool by Dr. Seuss (Ted Geisel) was runner-up for the Caldecott Medal for the best in children's books.

Leonard Lee's new play *Sweet Poison*, will be given a fall production on Broadway by James M. Herd.

Elliot Paul continues his amusing autobiographical saga in *A Ghost Town On the Yellowstone* which is a Random House book.

Adams In Eden, a new play by Lenore Coffee and William Cowen, will be presented in London next month by Linnit & Dunfee with Cyril Raymond and Rosamund John starring. Their first play, *Family Portrait*, has just completed a successful London run.

In *Ape And Essence*, Aldous Huxley's new novel, he returns to the vein of *Brave New World*, "creating a terrifying world of the future in the light of mankind's sixteen years of 'progress' since the publication of the earlier book." It will appear August 18th under Harper's imprint.

Dale Van Every will have a 25,000 copies first printing for his new novel, *The Shining Mountains*, which Julian Messner publishes September 10th. It is a tale of the vast Louisiana Territory in the days of Lewis and Clark.

John Roeburt, who wrote *Jigsaw* for Tower Productions, has sold his novel, *The Fingerman* to Simon & Schuster.

Nightmare Town, by Dashiell Hammett, is a current American Mercury reprint, edited by Ellery Queen. The volume contains a novellette and several of Hammett's early short stories.

All You Need Is One Good Break, a new play by Arnold Manoff, had its premiere performance at the Actors' Laboratory Theatre on July 16th, directed by John Berry and J. Edward Bromberg. It first appeared as a novella in *Story Magazine*.

THE LAST ROMANTIC by Charles Bonner, author of *Adam Had Four Sons*, is on the fall list of Coward-McCann. It is the story of a young man of the 1930s and the five women in his life. Mr. Bonner has been doubly busy. In collaboration with Wynn Bonner, he produced a son, Christopher Anthony Bonner, who arrived July 21st at the Good Samaritan Hospital.

Other SWG members' wives have been busy, too. Dorshka (Mrs. Samson) Raphaelson is currently represented in the bookstalls by *Morning Song*, the story of an actress of 25 years ago, and Marjorie (Mrs. Roy) Chanslor has just delivered her new novel, *The Merriwethers*, to Viking for winter publication.

Roy Chanslor, author of *Hazard*, is on Simon & Schuster's fall list with a second novel, *The Liberty Tree*.

The Moth is James Cain's new book. Alfred Knopf is the publisher.

Eleazar Lipsky is represented by *Murder One* in the mystery department.

HORACE MCCOY'S *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye* is the Number One Thriller. His first novel *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* is being reprinted by Penguin and he has signed to do six cooking essays for *Esquire*.

Triangle is bringing out pocket editions of Val Lewton's *No Bed Of Her Own* and Vicki Baum's *Mortgage On Life*.

Robert Wilder, author of *Flamingo Road*, has an August entry by Putnam in *The Bright Feather*, an historical novel concerning Osceola and the Seminole War.

Millard Lampell's first novel, *The Hero*, is a Messner offering for late October.

Hang On To Love, a play in two acts, by Lynn Riggs, has just come off the Samuel French presses.

Stanley Richards will have his play, *The Proud Age*, tried out at Peak's Island, Maine, on August 10th, and he has just sold a one-act play, *Once To Every Boy*, to the Banner Play Bureau in San Francisco for publication.

A short story, *The Sale*, by Martin Field, was featured in the July Woman's Home Companion.

John Jennings, author of *The Salem Frigate*, which went to a printing of 80,000 copies, is on Doubleday's fall list with *River To The West*. This is the story of Rory O'Rourke, confidential agent to John Jacob Astor, and key figure in Astor's great bid for control of the Pacific Northwest at the turn of the 19th century.

Don Stanford's story, *No Imagination*, appeared in the American Magazine for July. He announces a story in the August 7th issue of the Saturday Evening Post and a complete novel in the September Red Book.

Harcourt, Brace & Co., have compiled *The Saroyan Special*, featuring the best of William Saroyan's stories. His *Human Comedy* sold 868,000 copies.

Westward The Dream, by Frances Marion is another August publication by Doubleday. It is a novel of early California, painted on a broad canvas and covering several generations.

Man's florid burial customs are the themes of two books—*The Loved*

One by Evelyn Waugh and *Abide With Me* by Cedric Belfrage.

The Broken Gate by Charles Grayson is also on the current "popular list."

Charles Jackson's newest novel, *The Outer Edges*, is on the stands. It shows the psychological effect of a brutal murder upon a widely scattered group of bystanders and newspaper readers.

Harper's has scheduled Betty Smith's novel, *Tomorrow Will Be Better* for September release.

Thames Williamson uses Nero's Rome for *The Gladiator*, a Coward-McCann novel coming in October. Mr. Williamson has made three trips to Italy for research material.

IRVING STONE turns from Vincent Gogh and Eugene Debs to Governor Earl Warren of California in his new Prentice-Hall biography. *Meet Earl Warren*, contracted for "on July 6th by telephone, was delivered to the publishers on August 1st for bookstore debut on August 16th. Mr. Stone completed the biography of the Republican vice presidential nominee, the first ever published, while participating in the Indiana Writers' Conference at the University of Indiana between July 19th and July 25th."

Walk In Darkness by Hans Habe will be published by Putnam's in September. This novel is described as "a compassionate re-statement of the world's responsibilities toward its minorities."

The Personal Book Shop in San Francisco celebrated its fifth birthday with an autograph party for Jesse Lasky, Jr.'s *Spindrift*, published by Prentice-Hall.

Pocket Books has just reprinted Roy Huggins' *The Double Take*.

Silent Witness, a story by Harold Goldman, will reveal the technique of a "perfect murder" in a September issue of *Collier's*.

October will see the Random House publication of *The Young Lions* by Irwin Shaw. It is a story of three men at war and their fight for human dignity and decency.

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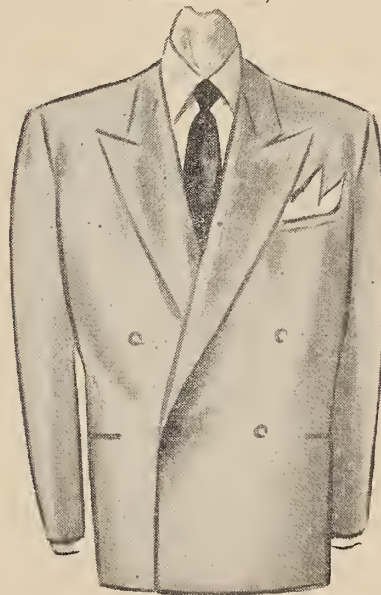
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Fred Zinnemann

(Continued from Page 13)

no answer, the boy took that name for his own.

At the UNRRA camp, where directors were trained in psychological work and made every effort to place a child in a milieu which had some degree of comforting familiarity, the child remained undiscovered for a long time. In the midst of friendly faces, he was still lost, without even the solace of his own identity and his own dimly-remembered religious background.

The ambulance incident, also depicted in *The Search* demonstrates these peculiar mental twists, unrecognized even by those counsellors whose vocation it was to recognize them. No one could anticipate the fact that being transported in an ambulance marked with a Red Cross, that accepted international symbol of mercy, would bring hysteria and frenzy to children who had seen such ambulances used as lethal gas chambers.

OCCASIONALLY an episode was discarded because it was "too much" . . . in every sense.

Such was the story of the first Christmas after the liberation, described to us by one of the directors.

Her charges, some two hundred of them, were Christian children between the ages of eight and twelve. Christmas was approaching. It was necessary to somehow divert the children and arouse them from a lethargy of hopelessness since there had been an epidemic of attempted suicide.

After inspired scrounging, the director obtained a hundred and fifty small chickens. A group of the men went out into the forest and cut down a large pine tree. Every member of the staff worked late at night for weeks making homemade ornaments for the tree and simple, homemade toys. Plans for the celebration were kept a secret; preparations went on behind closed doors.

On Christmas Eve the pathetically docile children were led into a room and seated. In their robot-like way they obeyed every order. The doors were opened and the tree, the gifts

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and the table laden with chicken were disclosed. Workers from every side urged the children forward and for the first time they refused to respond. They wouldn't approach the tree nor reach for the food. Finally, some of them burst into tears.

"Suddenly we realized what we had done," the director told us. "We had reminded them of happier Christmases and of their lost families. They refused to accept it and so break down their painfully acquired pitiful defenses."

"I had hysterics," she said. "The men cried."

THE honesty of these UNRRA workers in admitting their well-intentioned mistakes was infectious. The writer, the director, everyone working on the film, came to feel that the theoretical search for realism had become a daily, grubbing . . . and rewarding . . . job.

I have said, inadvisedly, that the film story for *The Search* was conceived in its own locale and that it derives its authenticity from this fact rather than because the filming took place there. (As a matter of fact,

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many of the sequences were actually filmed in Switzerland.)

The story was conceived when war overtook Europe. It was brought to the screen when the writer saw the story in actuality and used his skill to edit, emphasize and translate. Perhaps the subject matter for *The Search* was different from most motion picture subject matter; I cannot but feel that any and all subject matter would profit from this method and that it is by such means the motion picture will reach full stature as a medium.

TWICE-SOLD TALES

Martin Field is preparing a new edition of *Twice-Sold Tales*, printed in these pages in May, 1947. His account of how middle-men, agents and producers bought stories at low prices and sold them high, pocketing the profit, brought considerable comment and caused several operators to desist from the practice. He would appreciate information from screen writers who have suffered from the practice recently.

A LISTING OF SCREEN WRITERS' CREDITS
EARNED ON FEATURE PRODUCTIONS
OF CURRENT AND RECENT RELEASE

CREDITS

JUNE 15, 1948 TO JULY 15, 1948

B

LEONARDO BERCOVICI
Sole Screenplay THE UNAFRAID, U.I.

MARTIN BERKELEY
Joint Screenplay (with Jerry Cady) SAND, Fox

WALTER BERNSTEIN
Joint Adaptation (with Ben Maddow) THE UNAFRAID, U.I.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT
Joint Screenplay Basis (with Philip Macdonald and Albert Duffy) THE DARK PAST, Col.

WILLIAM BOWERS
Play Basis WEST OF TOMORROW, Frank Seltzer Prod.

C

JERRY CADY
Joint Screenplay (with Martin Berkeley) SAND, Fox

ROBERT CARSON
Sole Story YOU GOTTA STAY HAPPY, U.I.

VERA CASPARY
Sole Adaptation THREE WIVES, Fox

ROYAL K. COLE
Joint Original Screenplay (with Basil Dickey, William Lively and Sol Shor) FEDERAL AGENTS VS. UNDERWORLD, INC., Rep.

DOROTHY COOPER
Joint Screenplay (with Dorothy Kingsley) A DATE WITH JUDY, MGM

D

BASIL DICKEY
Joint Original Screenplay (with Royal K. Cole, William Lively and Sol Shor) FEDERAL AGENTS VS. UNDERWORLD, INC., Rep.

ALBERT DUFFY
Joint Screenplay Basis (with Philip Macdonald and Michael Blankfort) THE DARK PAST, Col.

E

ROSS EVANS
Joint Screenplay (with Walter Reisch and Dorothy Parker) THE FAN, Fox

F

IRWIN R. FRANKLYN
Sole Adaptation DAUGHTER OF RAMONA, Martin Mooney Productions

DANIEL FUCHS
Sole Screenplay CRISS CROSS, U.I.

G

AUGUSTUS GOETZ
Joint Screenplay and Joint Play Basis (with Ruth Goetz) THE HEIRESS, Par.

RUTH GOETZ

Joint Screenplay and Joint Play Basis (with Augustus Goetz) THE HEIRESS, Par.

HUGH GRAY

Additional Dialogue, THE UNAFRAID, U.I.

H

CHARLES HAAS

Sole Screenplay MOONRISE (Charles K. Feldman Group Prod.) Rep.

EDMUND HARTMANN

Joint Screenplay (with Melville Shavelson and Jack Rose) SORROWFUL JONES, Par.

SAM HELLMAN

Joint Screenplay Basis (with Gladys Lehman and William R. Lipman) SORROWFUL JONES, Par.

LIONEL HOUSER

Sole Screenplay BALTIMORE ESCAPE, RKO

NORMAN HOUSON

Sole Original Screenplay BROTHERS IN THE SADDLE, RKO

RICHARD HUBLER

Sole Original Screenplay BUNGALOW 13, Belsam Prod.

I

CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD

Joint Story (with Lesser Samuels) BALTIMORE ESCAPE, RKO

K

DOROTHY KINGSLEY

Joint Screenplay (with Dorothy Cooper) A DATE WITH JUDY, MGM

JOHN KLEMPNER

Novel Basis THREE WIVES, Fox

HARRY KURNITZ

Joint Screenplay (with Frank Tashlin) ONE TOUCH OF VENUS, U.I.

L

ALAN LEMAY

Sole Story and Screenplay THE WALKING HILLS, Col.

GLADYS LEHMAN

Joint Screenplay Basis (with William R. Lipman and Sam Hellman) SORROWFUL JONES, Par.

ALEEN LESLIE

Character Basis A DATE WITH JUDY, MGM

EUGENE LING

Joint Screenplay (with Malvin Wald) INSIDE THE WALL, Eagle-Lion

WILLIAM R. LIPMAN

Joint Screenplay Basis (with Gladys Lehman and Sam Hellman) SORROWFUL JONES, Par.

WILLIAM LIVELY

Joint Original Screenplay (with Sol Shor, Basil Dickey and Royal K. Cole) FEDERAL AGENTS VS. UNDERWORLD, INC., Rep.

DANE LUSSIER

Sole Screenplay FAMILY HONEYMOON, U.I.

M

PHILIP MACDONALD

Joint Screenplay Basis (with Michael Blankfort and Albert Duffy) THE DARK PAST, Col.

BEN MADDOW

Joint Adaptation (with Walter Bernstein) THE UNAFRAID, U.I.

JOSEPH L. MANKIEWICZ

Sole Screenplay THREE WIVES, Fox

AL MARTIN

Joint Screenplay (with Joseph Carole and Harvey Gates) RACING LUCK, Kay Pictures, Inc.
Sole Original Screenplay, MONEY MADNESS, Sig Neufeld Prod. (Film Classic)

N

JACK NATTEFORD

Joint Original Screenplay (with Luci Ward) OUTLAW VALLEY, RKO

O

RON ORMOND

Joint Story and Joint Screenplay (with Ira Webb) DEAD MAN'S GOLD, Western Adventure Prod.
Joint Story and Joint Screenplay (with Ira Webb) MARK OF THE LASH, Western Adventure Prod.

R

MILTON RAISON

Sole Original Screenplay BIG TOWN SCANDAL (Pine Thomas) Par.

WALTER REISCH

Joint Screenplay (with Ross Evans and Dorothy Parker) THE FAN, Fox

JACK ROSE

Joint Screenplay (with Melville Shavelson and Edmund Hartmann) SORROWFUL JONES, Par.

S

WILLIAM B. SACKHEIM

Sole Screenplay NIGHT BEAT, W.B.

LESSER SAMUELS

Joint Story (with Christopher Isherwood) BALTIMORE ESCAPE, RKO

OSCAR SAUL

Joint Adaptation (with Malvin Wald) THE DARK PAST, Col.

CHARLES SCHNEE

Sole Screenplay INTERFERENCE, RKO

RAYMOND SCHROCK

Sole Screenplay DAUGHTER OF RAMONA, Martin Mooney Prod.

MELVILLE SHAVELSON

Joint Screenplay (with Edmund Hartmann and Jack Rose) SORROWFUL JONES, Par.

IRWIN SHAW

Sole Story INTERFERENCE, RKO

In this listing of screen credits, published monthly in THE SCREEN WRITER, the following abbreviations are used: COL—Columbia Pictures Corporation; E-L—Eagle-Lion Studios; FOX—20th Century-Fox Film Corporation; GOLDWYN—Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.; MGM—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios; MONO—Monogram Pictures Corporation; PAR—Paramount Pictures, Inc.; PRC—Producers Releasing Corporation of America; REP—Republic Productions, Inc.; RKO—RKO Radio Studios, Inc.; ROACH—Hal E. Roach Studio, Inc.; UA—United Artists Corporation; UNI-INT'L—Universal-International Pictures; UWP—United World Pictures; WB—Warner Brothers Studios. (S) designates screen short.

SOL SHOR

Joint Original Screenplay (with Royal K. Cole, Basil Dickey and William Lively) **FEDERAL AGENTS VS. UNDERWORLD, INC.**, Rep.

FRANCIS SWANN

Sole Screenplay **WEST OF TOMORROW**, Frank Seltzer Prod.

T**FRANK TASHLIN**

Joint Screenplay (with Harry Kurnitz) **ONE TOUCH OF VENUS**, U.I.

KARL TUNBERG

Sole Screenplay **YOU GOTTA STAY HAPPY**, U.I.

W**MALVIN WALD**

Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with Eugene Ling) **INSIDE THE WALL**, Eagle-Lion

Joint Adaptation (with Oscar Saul) **THE DARK PAST**, Col.

LUCI WARD

Joint Original Screenplay (with Jack Natte-

ford) **OUTLAW VALLEY**, RKO

IRA WEBB

Joint Story and Joint Screenplay (with Ron Ormond) **DEAD MAN'S GOLD**, Western Adventure Prod.

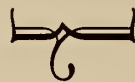
Joint Story and Joint Screenplay (with Ron Ormond) **MARK OF THE LASH**, Western Adventure Prod.

ROBERTSON WHITE

Sole Adaptation **WEST OF TOMORROW**, Frank Seltzer Prod.

ROBERT C. WILLIAMS

Sole Original Screenplay **THE DENVER KID**, Rep.



The Manuscript Market

(Continued from Page 8)

THOMAS SAVAGE, Lona Hanson, Unpublished Novel

EAGLE-LION STUDIOS

VAL BURTON (with Sheridan Gibney and Stanley Roberts), **The World and Little Willie**, Unpublished Story

NORBERT GAGAN, **These Were My Orders**, Published Story

SHERIDAN GIBNEY (with Val Burton and Stanley Roberts), **The World and Little Willie**, Unpublished Story

TONY MANN (with Francis Rosenwald) **Red Stallion Of The Rockies**, Unpublished Story

ROBERT MUSEL (with Murray Rosenblatt), **Cops Wear Skirts**, Unpublished Story

SAM NEUMAN, **Police File**, Unpublished Story

STANLEY ROBERTS (with Val Burton and Sheridan Gibney), **The World And Little Willie**, Unpublished Story

MURRAY ROSENBLATT (with Robert Musel), **Cops Wear Skirts**, Unpublished Story

FRANCIS ROSENWALD (with Tony Mann), **Red Stallion Of The Rockies**, Unpublished Story

ENTERPRISE PRODUCTIONS

LIBBY BLOCK, **Wild Calendar**, Published Novel

BRET HARTE, **Tennessee's Pardner**, Published Novel

IRA WOLFERT, **Tucker's People**, Published Novel

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

ELEANOR ATKINSON, **Greyfriars Bobby**, Published Novel

JOE DAVID BROWN, **Stars In My Crown**, Published Novel

A. A. Dunn, **East Of Fifth**, Published Novel

FATHER E. J. EDWARDS, **The Chosen**, Unpublished Story

JULES FURTHMAN, **Bread Upon The Waters**, Unpublished Story

JOHN HAWKINS (with Ward Hawkins), **Tomorrow Is Yours (Ground For Divorce)**, Published Story

WARD HAWKINS (with John Hawkins), **Tomorrow Is Yours (Ground For Divorce)**, Published Story

JOEL MALONE (with Harold Swanton), **Jugernaut**, Unpublished Story

RICHARD MEALAND, **Celebration**, Unpublished Story

NORMAN REILLY RAINE, **The Case of Millie Pearson**, Unpublished Story

HAROLD SWANTON (with Joel Malone), **Jugernaut**, Unpublished Story

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

MARTHA ALBRAND, **After Midnight**, Published Story

RKO RADIO

CARL FOREMAN, **The Clay Pigeon**, Unpublished Story

LEONARD L. NEELY, **Rookie Neely**, Short Story from the novel, **The Purple Testament**

WALLACE I. REID, **Like A Ring Untarnished**, Short Story from the Novel, **The Purple Testament**

HERBERT RAVENEL SASS, **Affair At St. Albans**, Published Article

J. H. WALLIS, **Sam Wynne**, Unpublished Novel

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX

A. I. BEZZERIDES, **Red Of My Blood**, Published Novel

RAPHAEL BLAU, **Mother Is A Freshman**, Unpublished Story

HAROLD BUCHMAN (with Charles Kaufman), **High Fever**, Unpublished Story

ELIZABETH CADELL, **Gay Pursuit**, Published Novel

VALENTINE DAVIES (with Shirley W. Smith), **It Happens Every Spring**, Unpublished Story

CHARLES DAVID (with Victoria Wolf), **Hearts And Checks**, Unpublished Story

KETTI FRINGS, **Cloak Of Innocence**, Unpublished Story

ERNEST HEMINGWAY, **Snows Of Kilimanjaro**, Short Story

GEORGE JESSEL, **Here Come The Stars**, Unpublished Story

CHARLES KAUFMAN (with Harold Buchman), **High Fever**, Unpublished Story

AL LEWIS (with Arthur Lewis), **Oh You Beautiful Doll**, Unpublished Story

ARTHUR LEWIS (with Al Lewis), **Oh You Beautiful Doll**, Unpublished Story

DANA LYON, **The Frightened Child**, Published Novel

JOSEPH SANTLEY, **I Don't Care**, Unpublished Story

SAMUEL SHELLABARGER, **Prince Of Foxes**, Published Novel

SHIRLEY W. SMITH (with Valentine Davies), **It Happens Every Spring**, Unpublished Story

NELIA GARDNER WHITE, **Winter No Birds Came**, Published Novel

VICTORIA WOLF (with Charles David), **Hearts And Checks**, Unpublished Story

HERMAN WOUK, **Slattery's Hurricane**, Published Novel

UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL

ART COHN, **Disbarred**, Unpublished Story

HOMER CROY, **Family Honeymoon**, Published Novel

PHILIP G. EPSTEIN, **Mistakes Will Happen**, Original Screenplay

TAMARA HOVEY, **Bagdad**, Unpublished Story

EMILY KIMBROUGH, **It Gives Me Great Pleasure**, Series of Short Stories

JERRY D. LEWIS, **Twinkle, Twinkle**, Unpublished Story

EDGAR LUSTGARTEN, **One More Unfortunate**, Published Novel

FORREST ROSAIRE, **East Of Midnight**, Published Novel

LIONEL SHAPIRO, **Paradise Lost, 1948**, Unpublished Novelette

GEORGE SHERMAN, **Wanted—Frank Hunter**, Unpublished Story

IRVING SHULMAN, **The Amboy Dukes**, Published Novel

DON TRACY, **Criss Cross**, Published Novel

WALTER WANGER PICTURES

ELIZABETH SANXAY HOLDING, **The Blank Wall**, Published Novel

HERBERT RAVENEL SASS, **Anne Of The Indies**, Published Story

WARNER BROTHERS

MICHAEL MACDOUGALL, **The Candy Kid Levels**, Published Story

ISABEL MOORE, **Career Girl**, Published Story



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**Screen
Writer**

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Next Month and Thereafter

THE STATE OF THE UNIONS

A Report on the Economic Crisis in Hollywood

PSYCHIATRY LOOKS AT MOVIE PSYCHIATRIST

By Albert Deutsch

Science Editor, New York Star

A MATTER OF TIME

By F. Hugh Herbert

THE EUROPEAN STORY MARKET

By William A. Drake

THE CLICHE: A NECESSARY EVIL

By Edward Moran

THE DOCUMENTARY FEATURE

By John Higgins

CENTRAL AMERICAN ATTITUDES ON STORIES

By Oliver H. P. Garrett

Future Articles by

KEN ENGLUND

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HENRY MYERS

SAMSON RAPHAELSON

RAYMOND SCHINDLER

MALVIN WALD

The Screen Writer

F. HUGH HERBERT

"A Matter of Time"

A Short Story

JOHN DALES, JR.

SAG Contract Negotiations

EDITORIAL

*A Report to the Members
From the Executive Board*

KEITH SWARD

Boy and Girl Meet Neurosis

HUGH MACMULLAN

Another Vicious Circle



Books Into Films

There follows a reprint from the "Books into Films" column of the PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY, who have kindly permitted us to reprint it.

By PAUL S. NATHAN

STRANGE as it seems, the picture companies are buying books. Though film pursestrings are being pulled tighter than the laces in grandma's corset, it still takes stories to turn out movies.

Fifty thousand dollars, if report can be trusted, has passed from United California Productions to I. A. R. Wylie for her novel *Ho, the Fair Wind*, published by Random after *Ladies' Home Journal* serialization in '45. Selwyn Jepson's *Outrun the Constable*, a *Collier's* serial and Doubleday title last year, has been acquired by Transatlantic Pictures, the Alfred Hitchcock indie for approximately \$12,000.

Blackjack, a melodrama of Oklahoma in the 1920's by Joseph E. Kelleam (*Sloane*) has just gone to Bruce Cabot and Ray Ryan for an undisclosed amount. Trans World Films has bought English-language rights to *Dona Barbara* by Venezuelan President Romulo Gallegos a visitor to this country a few weeks ago.

Warners has laid out \$5000 for an option on Stuart Engstrand's *Beyond the Forest* and if this Creative Age novel scheduled for September, hits the bestseller lists, Mr. Engstrand stands to make a nice piece of change. The contract includes an escalator clause which, if enough copies of the book are sold, could bring the author close to \$100,000.

Another deal involves *New York Confidential*, forthcoming Ziff-Davis book by Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer. Marathon Pictures, low-budget outfit, is said to have paid \$5,000 down against a percentage of the film's gross.

This Corner's reference in the July 10 issue to the scant number of movies on Protestant themes apparently touched a sensitive spot. Among those who felt impelled to speak up was one lady who wrote in to ask why I hadn't mentioned the

(Continued on Page 30)

The Screen Writer

Vol. 4, No. 3

SEPTEMBER, 1948

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E D I T O R I A L

REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP

THE summer, gone now, has been a time of tribulation for workers in films. Within the framework of two Philadelphia conventions, the box office slips; with Gorgeous George televising his pailletted robe behind every bar, prestige pictures (sic!) collapse and Abbott and Costello flourish; with Berlin in siege and Israel in transition, craft guilds meet and battle and compromise; with the draft and astronomical meat prices, the British slap on a forty-five per cent quota restriction; with the un-American committee groaning again, the carpenters' strike against the studios enters its tragic third year. It has, in fact, been a summer of crisis, and the Screen Writers' Guild has, as usual, been deeply involved. For those of you who've been away, but mostly for the sake of the record, we've tried to assemble all the facts in a neat if depressing package. There is no order of importance. *Everything* is important.

BOX OFFICE

According to the best (and they are as reliable as we can get) reports, the approximate drop in box office through July 1948 as compared with July 1947 is 5%

The Box Office returns for Metro increased 16% for the first twelve weeks of 1948, compared to the same period for 1947. Five other studios showed a loss during the same period of 6½%. While the box office was up for July in New York about 6%, it dropped in Los Angeles and Chicago approximately 10%.

Eric Johnston, on July 20th, reported a net income from foreign sources for 1947 of \$90,000,000. He predicted that in 1948 the income would be \$70,000,000, and that in 1949 it would drop from between \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000.

THE STUDIOS

R.K.O. — Howard Hughes bought control from Floyd Odlum. Dore Schary resigned. Rogell, Tevlin, and Lockhart appointed committee in charge of production. Future policy: unknown. Writer prognosis: dubious.

PARAMOUNT — Apparently continues in strong position. At least, the management remains firm. Writer prognosis: continuation of past policies.

WARNERS—Continuation of past policies.

M.G.M.—Dore Schary signed as head of production, second only to Mayer. Writer prognosis: should be good.

U.I.—Stormy days. New production policy being discussed. Writer prognosis: dubious.

20TH CENTURY—Fine. Writer prognosis: continuation of past policies.

REPUBLIC—Continuation of past policies.

EAGLE-LION — Expanding production. Expects to employ more writers.

COLUMBIA—Employment above average. Has included more budget pictures.

MONOGRAM—Continuation of past policies.

OTHER INDEPENDENTS—More than 100 firms are producing independently in spite of the difficulty of financing production. Approximately the same number of writers are employed in this field as in 1946 and 1947, and there has been a noticeable increase in the number of writers going to work for independents in the last few weeks. In fact, the pattern of Independent companies operating on major lots and releasing through major distribution channels has become more definite. R.K.O., Universal (Irving Brecher, Rampart, Kanin, Inter-Wood, etc.), Columbia (Buchman, Rossen, etc.), Paramount Eagle-Lion, Monogram, Film Classics (which, with Screen Guild, plans to produce thirty pictures and to release four Edward Small reissues), United Artists, all tend in this expanding direction.

THE GUILDS

For weeks, during the summer, the Actors and Producers did not meet and everyone expected a strike. The same situation existed with the Directors. The issues on which the actors broke off negotiations were television, reissues, and option provisions in actors' contracts. When the Actors' Guild and Producers finally met and reached an agreement, reissues were dropped, television was settled by an agreement that the negotiations would continue, and that the Actors had the right to end their agreement if specific terms had not been agreed upon by a given date in 1949, and the Producers granted concessions in relation to options.

During the same period the Directors reached an agreement in principle with the Producers.

From the Writers' Guild point of view, probably the most significant fact in the Actors' and Directors' agreements is that no salary increases were granted. There were gains in general provisions, such as credit regulations for the Directors, improved lay-off and suspension clauses, etc. The big issue with the Actors—television—was finally recognized by the Producers as a subject for negotiation, which to some extent establishes the Actors' jurisdiction in this field and makes it possible for them to reach an agreement covering rates and working conditions on television films produced by the film companies.

THE UNIONS

The balance of power in the labor situation has changed greatly since the C.S.U. has been decidedly defeated. An A. F. of L. Council in the industry has been formed (an objective which Sorrell had worked toward for a number of years), but ironically it was brought about through the influence of Roy Brewer who was elected its chairman. This group has great potential strength and has on one occasion taken an ad in the trade papers on a question of interest to the Actors' Guild, the formation of a rival Screen Extras' Guild. This Council and the practical elimination of the C.S.U. gives great strength to the A. F. of L. and leaves as the only important groups outside the A. F. of L. Council, the Screen Writers' Guild and the Screen Directors' Guild. There are a few other independents such as the Art Directors and the Script Clerks.

Reissues, which have been mentioned frequently in our Guild, were recently discussed by Roy Brewer in publicizing the I.A.'s proposals for the setting up of a retirement plan. His suggestion generally was that a man who had reached a certain age and worked a given number of years in the industry—the total to be eighty — would be eligible for retirement (i.e., a man of sixty who had worked twenty years in the industry would be eligible). The fund would be built by a percentage payment from the take for reissues and by a wage increase, most of which would be paid into the fund by the Producers.

Unions are talking more in terms of security now than in terms of hourly wages. The Teamsters, whose contract expires this month, have been discussing an annual wage plan. With at least 25% of "back lot" labor unemployed, concern for security is paramount—hourly wages aren't so important. Negotiations coming up this fall between the I.A. and the Teamsters and Producers, as well as others, possibly, may indicate whether labor relations policy of industry

is keeping abreast of this situation. "Production cost" has been the cry of bankers and producers—if a creative labor policy could provide more secure annual income and at the same time reduce some of the burdensome "cost" arising out of high hourly wage demands, a tremendous gain would have been made.

The above questions mean to "back lot" people what the subject of "royalties" means to "creative" talent."

As this magazine went to press, five unions—the Teamsters, Janitors, Electricians, and Plasterers—reached an agreement with the Producers which will run until August 14, 1953. It provided no change in basic rates of pay but included improved location conditions, vacation pay and travel time provisions. It gives preference of employment to members with seniority in the industry.

This, then, is the general situation in town, the framework from which all problems in the industry derive. The writer has his own special problems.

WRITER EMPLOYMENT

At the present moment there are 840 active Guild members and 430 associate members, a total of 1270 members in all. At the same time in 1947 there were 1020 active members, 434 associate members, making a total of 1454 members in all.

Following is table of the number of writers employed at the major studios:

Contr't	Wk. to Wk.	Flat Deal	Guaranteed	Non Total	Act. Mem.
Aug. 1948, 87 (40.6% of No. employed)	106	10	6 (on 5 of whom we have no information re contracts)	(13) 214	840
June, 1945, 185 (51% of No. employed)	157	7	11	(30) 360	927

The number employed at independent studios in August of 1948 was 160.

In addition to the above, there are employed as producers or directors, and other capacities in the motion picture industry, approximately 80 active members, and in factual films, 25 members; thus the total number of members employed in August 1948 was 479.

The number of writers employed on Term Contract has decreased 53% since June 1945. The decrease has been general in all studios, which is indicated by the following figures:

Under Term Contract	June 1945	August 1948
Columbia	20	4
M.G.M.	69	42
Paramount	30	9
Republic	1	1
R.K.O.	16	5
Fox	22	15
U.I.	15	5
Warners	16	6
	—	—
	189	87

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SAG Contract Negotiations

By

JOHN DALES, JR.

Executive Secretary

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD

THERE were several issues in the contract negotiations recently held by the Screen Actors Guild which may be of some interest to members of the Screen Writers Guild. I suppose television tops the list.

Because television is bringing about a technological revolution in the amusement industry, all actors are vitally interested in this new medium. Our main problem regarding television in the months of negotiations in Hollywood was *not* to fix minimum wages and working conditions for actors performing in films made especially for television. We made no attempt to do that for we had no clear-cut idea as to what the traffic will stand. Also, through our American Federation of Labor international, the Associated Actors and Artistes of America, we have a Television Authority which is negotiating on this and other matters with the television station and network employers in New York.

Our main problem on television was to convince the Hollywood motion picture producers that television use of films is a medium distinctly separate from theatre exhibition of films and that wage scales and conditions which may be equitable for theatre films might be completely out-of-line for films made specially for use in television.

Frankly, what we had in mind—and still have in mind—is the necessity of negotiating a contract covering television film which will provide for additional payment for the cast when a film is televised more than once in

any locality. We believe that in television the actors should be paid proportionately for the number of times the film is shown. I suppose you might say that we are trying to do in television what never has been done in the production of theatre films.

BEFORE we could discuss any “repeat use payment” formula for television with the Hollywood motion picture producers, we had to persuade them to negotiate with us on television films separately and apart from our major negotiations for a contract covering theatre films. (The producers’ conception of their “property rights” in theatre films is too well known to warrant discussion here.)

After several months of the most difficult negotiations the Screen Actors Guild has had since 1937—and with the possibility of an actors’ strike in the offing—the producers finally agreed to special negotiations on the issue of wages and working conditions for films made specially for television. In doing so, the producers said they retained their position that they have the right to use any film they may make for any purpose whatsoever.

It will be our endeavor, in the special negotiations soon to get under way, to establish the principle of additional payment for the actors if a film is televised more than once in a given locality. This principle is established in the radio broadcasting industry and if the Hollywood motion picture producers wish to be a part of the television industry, we

believe they will finally come around to our way of thinking on this most important issue. We believe that the only way the producer himself can be assured of an adequate return on films made specially for television will be some sort of formula for payment based on the number of times the film is televised—and maybe on whether it is shown on a sustaining basis or to advertise commercial products.

Here is another phase of the television issue: In the past, a number of actors under contract to the motion picture studios have signed away their television rights in the films in which they have appeared. It is the position of the Guild that even in such cases, the actors have not signed away advertising rights, for the word “television” is not synonymous with advertising.

IN our recent negotiations, we obtained for contract players complete protection against civil suits for breach of personal service contract in event the Guild should call a strike. This was most important to protect the economic bargaining power of the Guild. Many actors’ personal contracts with studios extend far beyond the legal expiration dates in the Guild’s basic agreement with the producers. Our revised agreement with the producers provides that if at any legal termination of the contract the Guild should strike, no actor may be sued for breach of contract for striking. At the end of such a strike, the actor must finish the picture he was

(Continued on Page 30)

"A Matter of Time"

A SHORT STORY



MR. ARNOLD BRILL was a prosperous and successful manufacturer of putt-putt motors. He did not know a damn thing about putt-putt motors, but he had a great deal of money and the good sense to hire many people who *did*.

Mr. Brill lived, very comfortably, in a brownstone house in the East Seventies, with his wife, to whom he was devoted, and with three domestic servants who were devoted to Mrs. Brill. They were polite to Mr. Brill and did his bidding, but they thought he was a pain in the neck. This relationship had its roots in the fact that Mr. Brill was irascible and eccentric, two qualities which rarely endear the master to the servants.

Balding, bellicose Arnold Brill was a reader of *Time*. He had been a subscriber since the first issue and he always claimed that he read it from cover to cover every week. This was almost true, but not quite. He often skipped *Business* and *Housing*. This was not because he lacked interest in these topics, as such, but merely because he had found, more often than not, that these departments of his favorite magazine bored the hell out of him.

In addition to boasting that he read it from cover to cover, Reader Brill also boasted that he had a complete file of *Time* stored away in the attic in a series of cardboard cartons. He made the boast in good faith, being firmly convinced that he *had* a complete file, but this was not so. From time to time, generally in the spring, Mrs. Brill went through the attic and threw out a lot of junk, and, unknown to Mr. Brill, not a few years of *Time* had already been put into this category. Mrs. Brill thought

that keeping old magazines was very silly indeed, and seemed to be justified in this belief by the fact that Mr. Brill had never once set foot in the attic to refer to a back number or even just to see that they were all there.

When Mrs. Brill heard her husband boasting to his friends that he had a complete file of *Time* (approximately once a month) she did not disillusion him. On the contrary she generally said yes wasn't that nice for Arnold and then gently changed the subject. She suspected that if Mr. Brill ever *did* find out how many complete years and parts of years were missing he would be damned unpleasant about it, but this contingency did not alarm her unduly. Mr. Brill was pretty damned unpleasant about a lot of things and she had always survived.

IN addition to reading *Time* and collecting *Time*, Mr. Brill also wrote letters to *Time*. Erudite, eagle-eyed, alert Reader Brill was always among the first fifty to inform *Time* that *Time* erred when it *did* err.

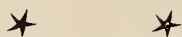
To Mr. Brill the detection of these errors was a matter of intense pleasure, and after he had written a derisive letter to *Time* about it he would always proudly read it aloud to Mrs. Brill who thought he was crazy to waste so much effort since *Time* had never bothered to print one of them. She always wanted to know, in the first place what business it was of Mr. Brill's to point out mistakes in a magazine. She also thought it was very funny that he could always find the time to write to a silly old magazine when he claimed to be too busy to write to her (Mrs. Brill's) sister Agnes, who was frequently bedridden

and just *loved* to hear from Arnold because he wrote such interesting newsy letters. And finally Mrs. Brill said she *could* not understand why Mr. Brill's letters to *Time* kept on getting ruder and ruder.

This last query Mr. Brill was reluctant to answer. He denied that his letters were getting ruder and ruder but he lied in his teeth. Piqued by the circumstance that none of his letters had ever been printed, even before they *began* to be rude, Reader Brill hoped to achieve publication by being offensive in a literate manner. Secretly he cherished the modest, if ignoble ambition, to irk the editors enough for him to receive some such printed accolade as, "Let Reader Brill go fry an egg." This would have made Mr. Brill intensely proud and happy. *Time* was always kept on the coffee table in the Brill living room and Mr. Brill had been looking forward for some years to the pleasure of picking up the current issue in a nonchalant manner and showing it to his friends with some such casual remark as, "The editors of *Time* suggest that I go fry an egg."

TO receive a mention in *Time* became an obsession with Mr. Brill and his letters to the editors became more frequent and increasingly offensive. Every Friday, directly after dinner, Mr. Brill retired to the library with the new *Time*, grimly determined to unearth some fact in which *Time's* editors had erred so shamefully that in common decency they could do no less than print his letter of correction. Often he sat up half the night, checking facts against the Encyclopedia Britannica and even against a World Almanac for 1929,

by F. Hugh Herbert



which somebody had given to Mrs. Brill and which she still kept because it had Doctor Peabody's address scribbled across the flyleaf and she was always forgetting to transfer it to her little black address book. Sometimes Mr. Brill even forced himself to plough through *Business* and *Housing* in the hope of finding pay-dirt, but since he was not too well-informed in these subjects it is possible that errors may have escaped him nevertheless.

AS a result of these protracted Friday night sessions, with their resultant loss of sleep, Mr. Brill invariably felt like hell on Saturdays. This irritated Mrs. Brill no end. She did not mind so much if Mr. Brill felt like hell on week-days, when he was at the office and could take it out on his staff, but since he was a man of substance and always spent Saturdays at home, she had a legitimate quarrel with the chronology of the case, and she decided to do something about it.

Short, sweet and simple was Mrs. Brill's solution. She would hide Mr. Brill's *Time* when it came on Friday, and claim that it must have been delayed in the mails. She would secrete it carefully, and not let him have it till Sunday evening. By these means, she argued, both Saturdays and Sundays would be comparatively peaceful, and if Mr. Brill felt like hell on Mondays that would be all right with her.

Mrs. Brill was well aware of the fact that no mail was delivered on Sundays, and deemed it not unlikely that Mr. Brill, likewise privy to this knowledge, might be skeptical when she claimed (as she intended to claim)

on Sunday evening that *Time* had just been delivered and wasn't that *strange*? She was just a little apprehensive, wondering what he would say, but she need not have been, for the contingency never arose.

Mr. Brill, informed on Friday during dessert (stewed pears) that his *Time* had not arrived, gulped his coffee hastily and announced that he was going out to the drug store.

"What on earth for?" said Mrs. Brill.

"To buy a copy of *Time*," said Mr. Brill.

Mrs. Brill said that was ridiculous. He subscribed to *Time*, it would surely be there tomorrow or the day after (she still clung to the hope of deferring Mr. Brill's *Time*-night to Sunday) and it was manifestly insane and a wicked waste of money to go out and spend twenty cents for a silly old magazine to which he was already entitled by virtue of a subscription.

Mr. Brill said that for twenty years he had set Friday night aside for a study of *Time*, and that twenty cents more or less was insufficient consideration to induce him to postpone it.

Mrs. Brill, who had hidden *Time* under the middle cushion of the davenport, felt like a fool but there was nothing she could do about it. Mr. Brill was already on his way out. He returned within ten minutes with a copy of *Time* for himself and a box of Kleenex for Mrs. Brill, who coveted this still somewhat scarce commodity. Under the circumstances she said nothing. Mr. Brill retired to the library and did not get to bed till 3:25 a.m. At this hour he awakened Mrs. Brill (not deliberately but they shared a room) and promptly read to her a scathing letter to *Time* pointing

out where they had once more erred. Mrs. Brill said yes that sounded fine. She wanted to choke him.

IN the morning Mr. Brill felt like hell and so did Mrs. Brill. They wrangled bitterly all through breakfast and Doris, the parlormaid, reported in the kitchen that the old poop (Mr. Brill) was getting to be absolutely impossible. The upstairs-maid suggested that it was probably due to hardening of the arteries and the cook said the sooner they hardened permanently the better she would like it.

During the forenoon Mr. Brill said that he had a splitting headache and thought he would take a little nap. Mrs. Brill, who also had a splitting headache, thought that was a good idea. Mr. Brill elected to take his nap on the davenport in the living room, and in the course of rearranging the pillows discovered his hidden copy of *Time*.

Mr. Brill at once demanded, and got, an explanation.

Tearfully, Mrs. Brill told him all the facts, insisting that she had been motivated by the fear that a silly old magazine was actually coming between them. She recalled, sentimentally, all the pleasant Saturdays and Sundays they had spent before Mr. Brill had elected to dedicate Friday nights to that silly old magazine, and she declared emotionally that the sanctity of their marriage should be given priority over a silly old magazine.

These feminine and slightly redundant arguments evoked a responsive chord in Mr. Brill. Much to Mrs. Brill's surprise (and delight) he

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Boy and Girl Meet Neurosis



FOR some time now Hollywood has been doing its best to make us conscious of the unconscious. To get to this point, the motion picture industry had to throw over one of its own long-established inhibitions which decreed that mental ailments were not fit material for treatment on the screen. By now, thanks to this new departure in films, psychoanalysis—couch and all—has become a fixture on Main Street. It is anybody's guess just how far or in what direction the picture makers intend to go with this new type of film. We can, however, take stock of the psychological pictures that the industry has produced thus far.

What impelled the movie producers to take the plunge into depth psychology? Have some of the newer psychiatric insights deepened the screenwriter's approach to his material? Has the use of some of these concepts resulted in a more mature and realistic portrayal of social relationships on the screen?

I should like to consider these questions by examining a number of psychological films. What interests me in these pictures is not so much their plot or entertainment value, but rather their underlying psychology. Is this psychology sound or real or valid? Does it jibe with the thinking of the people who would seem to qualify as our best contemporary psychiatrists and psychoanalysts?

I might begin by asking what the psychological film is telling us about the symptoms of neurosis. What are some of the outward signs of the emotional disabilities we see depicted on the screen?

The troubled adult whose inner self Hollywood is busily plumbing is a fairly simple soul. He shows next to

no originality in the choice of the symptoms to which his difficulties give rise. This new fictional character is, first and foremost, a killer. He murders people or has homicide on the brain or in his heart. (*Shock, Possessed, Dark Mirror, The Locket, Rage In Heaven, Fear in the Night, Spellbound, Secret Beyond the Door, Mourning Becomes Electra.*) He goes off the deep end by taking his own life or toying with that idea from time to time. (*Possessed, The Locket, Rage in Heaven, Fear in the Night, Mourning Becomes Electra.*) As the "psychiatrics" have it, the neurotic also gets himself into trouble because of drinking. (*The Guilt of Janet Ames.*) He lies and steals as well. (*The Locket.*) When he doesn't crack up altogether, (*Shock and Possessed*), he sometimes loses the use of his limbs (*Janet Ames*) or the ability to remember things (*Possessed, Spellbound, Fear in the Night*). What we should look for, then, in the neurotic personality—or what Hollywood is telling us to look for—is murder, suicide, alcoholism, lying, kleptomania, amnesia and functional paralysis or thoroughgoing break down.

Now the Hollywood conception of what a neurosis looks like in action checks with reality, up to a point. Even so, I feel that I could get a better picture of the same phenomenon by asking the man on the street to tell me in his own words what he thinks of his mother-in-law or of his adolescent daughter who is currently too much for him. Human beings who are wound up emotionally do indeed develop some or all of the aberrations we have come to expect on the screen. As a rule, however, the psychoneurotics of everyday life are neither killers, nor alcoholics, nor thieves, nor raving maniacs. They are, on the con-

trary, much more commonplace specimens.

The ordinary neurotic of the flesh and blood variety suffers primarily from inner conflicts and from interpersonal relationships. He is a fearful, hostile, isolated soul who gets into trouble with people. As a consequence, he tends to founder in work and sex and marriage, in nearly every relationship he enters. His tensions bring on physical disorders of a functional character. Give him time and he will come up with some psychosomatic symptoms.

Only two of the "psychiatric" films I have seen come to grips with this central fact that neuroses and the graver emotional disturbances represent, at bottom, inner conflict and strained interpersonal relationships. These notable exceptions, to my way of thinking, are *The Seventh Veil* and *Mourning Becomes Electra*. Both of these pictures get somewhere because they catch the meaning of an emotional disturbance. The behavior patterns they treat in fictional form, all various manifestations of distorted social relationships, make sense. They ring true. They are images of ourselves. These two films dramatize certain feelings and actions that exist within every human being alive.

Most of our other "psychiatric" films employ no such concepts for explaining abnormal states of mind. What they settle for, consequently, are portrayals of the obvious, the superficial, or the bizarre. Then, to give us surface tension or the appearance of the real thing, the picture makers are forced to resort to props and background tricks.

On this count alone, therefore, or in these first efforts to give us just a surface picture of what a neurosis looks like, the union between Holly-

by Keith Sward



wood and Freud has not been a particularly happy one.

HOW DO NEUROTICS GET THAT WAY?

IF the average psychological film fails to do justice to the functioning psychoneurosis, in terms of mere description, does it do any better in its dramatic handling of abnormal motivations? What of the dynamics of the emotional illnesses we have watched unfold on the screen? As the picture makers present the facts, how do neurotics get that way?

Again, it is the films which treat neurosis as a meaningful disturbance of self-feelings and interpersonal feelings that have something to say on the subject of psychodynamics. *Mourning Becomes Electra* develops its classic theme of contorted family relationships. The British film, *The Seventh Veil*, explores with intelligence the relationships that binds a rich, sadistic, middle-aged bachelor to his ward, a beautiful and talented, though compulsive and terrified young concert artist. (Even *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* which does not pretend to deal with psychiatric truths on a serious level has the virtue of basing its theme on situations and relationships that are real at the core. This film also demonstrates what an intelligent screenwriter can do with psychological themes in the realm of fantasy.)

In the average psychological picture, however, Hollywood is bungling its treatment of motivation from beginning to end. Take the theme that it is the single, malevolent, traumatic experience that slants a child neurotically and haunts him for the rest of his days. Such is the message of *The Locket*. We witness in this film a full-blown, highly dangerous neurosis. The

central character of the picture is a kleptomaniac, a psychopathic liar and a murderess. All this deformation of personality is traced to the occurrence of a single childhood incident. The lovely psychopathic of *The Locket* got that way, the story goes, as a result of having been forced as a very young child to give up a dearly prized gift which she was later unjustly accused of stealing back. The mother of this unfortunate child is pictured on the other hand as a warm and level-headed sort of person.

The same concept of dynamics recurs in other films. The sick one in *Spellbound* is worse than neurotic. He is pre-psychotic. He has amnesia. He walks in his sleep, flourishing dangerous objects. He is a suspected murderer. His troubles, we learn, are rooted in the fact that during his childhood he accidentally killed a younger brother and has since all but broken nervously because of his guilt feelings. With *Possessed* it is jilted love—again the ravaging single incident—that drives our principal character to murder and schizophrenia. The same principle of psychogenesis is repeated in *Secret Beyond the Door*. Here, our psychopathic villain is a liar, a man of dark moods, and a potential killer. One good push from Oedipus accounts for his downfall. He thinks his mother locked him in his room when he was ten years old and this is simply more than he can take.

Need I say that the psychiatric doctrine of each of these films (*Possessed*, *The Locket*, *Spellbound*, *Secret Beyond the Door*) is false? Neuroses arise in the first place and go on from there not because of the effect of any isolated causal incidents, but because the individual whom we call neurotic has been exposed to prolonged traumatic atmosphere. All reputable

schools of psychiatry and psychology are of one mind on this point. Hence, the psychological film which plays up the single incident concept of psychogenesis is not psychological at all. It is distinctly un-psychological. It follows that no one of the four pictures in question gives us a picture of growth or progression, or of why it is that this or that character reaches the danger point or breaks the moment the pressure is turned on.

Little more can be said for the type of film which avoids the question of motivation altogether. In instances of this sort, the neuroses that sprout under the klieg lights are "uncaused." They just happen. We see some personality breaking or going berserk with no provocation whatsoever. *Shock*, an inexcusably bad film, goes in for behavior that is uncaused or unmotivated. Here, we have a mad psychiatrist on our hands. This deranged physician commits two murders and does his best to drive a third person insane. The film gives us no hint of what may have prompted all these acts of psychotic violence. To be sure the doctor doesn't like his wife. But after all! Evidently the moral of the picture—if it has one—is this: "When a person is seriously unbalanced, heaven only knows what he'll do next."

What about such a concept of human behavior, that you can expect anything from madmen? It is quite as false as the "single incident" theory of psychogenesis. The truth is, there is a certain consistency about all kinds of people, and the experienced psychotherapist can tell, within limits, where this or that mixed-up individual is headed. Certain cause and effect relationships and certain rough prognostications have been worked through in psychotherapy. The feelings and ac-

tions of neurotic and psychotic people are as logical, deterministically, as the ways of the person who passes for normal.

In passing, I might add that I question the wisdom of showing films which make quite a thing of seemingly uncaused mental states. Such pictures may heighten the tension of those movie-goers who are already emotionally upset or close to the borderline of a serious mental disturbance. Deeply neurotic individuals are usually lost and rudderless. They feel helpless and in the grip of forces they fear and don't understand. For that reason, one of the primary aims of therapy is to help a disturbed individual to realize that he is not a helpless victim of forces outside himself and that he can become, within limits, the master of his own destiny.

With *Fear in the Night* we get a somewhat different variation on the theme that a man's personality may explode in his face at a moment's notice, regardless of his make-up. *Fear in the Night* is a whodunit film with a psychiatric twist. It concerns a youth who commits a murder and then tries to take his own life while under the influence of hypnosis. He shows no predisposing psychopathic or criminal

tendencies that I can detect. He is an ordinary lad with no more than the usual load of post-adolescent insecurity, who is led astray by a criminally motivated amateur hypnotist. The catch to this particular treatment of motivation is a fairly fundamental one. It is this: No comparatively normal human being takes a fling at murder or suicide simply because he has been transported into a hypnotic state. For this reason alone, the picture *Fear in the Night* is purveying nonsense.

PSYCHOTHERAPY WHILE YOU WAIT

IF the typical psychological film falls short with its histories and diagnoses, it is equally inept in treating the processes by which neurotic individuals are relieved of their emotional ailments. Most of the producers of our films with a psychoneurotic problem find irresistible the various techniques of brief psychotherapy. All too often on the screen, magic steps in to wipe out the gravest of emotional disorders. Lazarus walks from his psychosomatic sick bed on a studio lot with the greatest of ease.

First of all, the psychic wonderworkers in the world of film raise the dead by resurrecting the single

traumatic incident. Such is the implication of *Spellbound* and *Secret Beyond the Door*. The central character in each of these pictures is seriously ill. He is only a hair's breadth this side of psychosis. Yet each of the two individuals is cured in a flash, the moment a certain repressed memory is dragged forward or upward into his conscious mind. Such portrayals of the leavening processes of psychotherapy may have entertainment value. I can not say. But I do know that comparable metamorphoses of character do not occur in the clinic. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, no responsible group of psychologists or psychiatrists endorses literally the thesis of change which either of these two films suggests.

For something really out of the ordinary in therapy-on-the-run, the honors might seem to be equally divided between *Secret Beyond the Door* and *The Guilt of Janet Ames*. I defer to *Janet Ames* myself. In this picture, two amateur psychologists go to work on one another. Each of the neophytes is gravely disturbed. One is a charming but far-advanced alcoholic. The other, an attractive young war widow, has conversion symptoms.

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In Memoriam

NED DANDY

1887 - 1948

After Lunch

By

LEONARD SPIGELGASS

MR. CLEWS returned from lunch with a slightly sour stomach and a vague sense of irritation. The first had been caused by the curry ravioli which, with his colitis, he should certainly not have eaten; the second, he hated to admit, had arisen from the fact that for the third time in three days, he'd lost the match game. From now on, he would go to a drive-in and save himself the humiliation of participating in a contest for which he clearly had no talent.

He sat down at his desk, toyed for a moment with the scissors and paper knife in their red moroccan case, and then forced himself to look at the first page of his treatment, now so neatly typed on yellow punched paper. It began with the word 'OPENING' in capitals, underlined, and it went on: "Girl comes out of subway. Looks back. Presses against building wall. Man with hat passes. Obviously looking for her. She flattens herself. He doesn't see her. She hurries down street, into Macy's. (Note: Find something different. Toy shop? Undertakers?) Take sequence from book in which she goes in looking one way, and comes out looking another."

MR. CLEWS thought idly about how many pictures he had written about the way the girl goes into a place, looking one way, and comes out, looking another. Got to be a place, where you can get a wig, or dye your hair. Got to be a girl who's just murdered a man, or been released from prison, or a spy. Mr. Clews sighed regretfully when he thought of spies. How easy it had

been with the Nazis. How easy it had been with Conrad Veidt. Now, with the Russians, you had no props. No scars. No monocles. No throaty Viennese accent like Mady Christians'. Maybe the thing to do was to write it for S. Z. Sakall. Yop. That was it. Sakall. He would call Mr. Brady and try Sakall out on him. He reached for the phone, and suddenly remembered that Brady was having a big Producer lunch with Mr. Cafferty, back only this morning from a conference with New York. Mr. Clews wondered who New York was exactly. For so long, now, New York wanted the title changed, or New York thought Miss Cresswell was poison at the box office, or New York decreed economy.

NEW YORK clearly was decreeing economy at the Big Producer lunch. Mr. Clews remembered that the trades had reported a four day conference at the Home Office in which receipts, costs, foreign markets, and allied subjects were discussed. Mr. Clews felt rather sorry for Mr. Brady who was handling some of the Big Ones—three million dollar deals in technicolor. He would bear the brunt of Mr. Cafferty's stinging sarcasm, who had, in turn, just borne the brunt of New York's. Mr. Clews decided the brunt had gone far enough, and he crossed the subject of Sakall off his agenda for the afternoon.

He got up, lay down on his couch, stared at the ceiling, determined to find a way to keep the action going for two reels, perhaps without dialogue. Yesterday Mr. Brady had given it as his considered opinion that pic-

tures should return to First Principles—action, movement, suspense. "Talk! Talk! Talk!" was what Mr. Brady had said exactly. "Yat-a-tat-yat-a-tat-yata-a-tat. I'm sick of it. I want houses burning down, and cars going off cliffs. Let's get back to Creighton Hale and Pearl White."

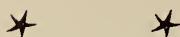
Try as he would, Mr. Clews could not force himself back to Creighton Hale and Pearl White so soon after lunch. He tried to remember a picture he had once seen with Bessie Barriscale which seemed to be oddly like the job in hand, but he couldn't remember it, nor was he convinced that it wasn't Mary Philbin, and he reached out for a trade paper and glanced at it.

HE saw that biz was down all over, particularly in the key cities; he saw that studios were cutting personnel and announcing revised budgets; he saw an editorial which denounced arty pictures, and message pictures, and the fiends who were responsible for them. He felt conscience-stricken, lying on the couch, wasting the studio's time and money. There he was, in a world in crisis, in an industry in crisis, malingering, half-sleeping, and he wondered about the Big Trouble that had come to Hollywood. What did *he* have to do with it?

Well, he had over thirty screen credits in seventeen years, five Pictures of the Month, one Academy Award nomination, two sensational box office sensations, quite a lot of pictures that had made quite a lot of money.

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Another Vicious Circle



AS a story editor, I cannot admit that I wait with much eagerness for the morning delivery of manuscripts. Yet I like to read, and am not of a dyspeptic or cavilling disposition. But, twice bitten, twice shy, I know that the various agents today as yesterday will present me with a large mass of undigested material, unrelated to the wants of our company, not fairly representing the talents of their writers. For instance, I am positive one agent, since this is Monday and he favors me weekly on that day, will send a bulky envelope containing at least six scripts. The stories will go something like this (and I am changing synopses only enough to avoid positive identification):

- (1) The Archangel Michael takes over as pilot on the Stratoliner in response to the prayers of an elderly lady who, alone among the passengers is of a religious nature. In the course of the trip, quarreling lovers are reunited, goodness comes to a black marketer, and the elderly lady has her foreclosed Missouri farm returned to her. Michael lands the plane in Chicago, instead of flying off with it to happier climes.
- (2) Jerry Dalton, a private detective, hired to find the missing Lansdowne diamonds, has hair-raising adventures with a local gang of thieves, only to discover the diamonds being worn by the innocent heroine who thought they were junk jewelry.
- (3) Bill, the orphan kid on the ranch, finds a stray dog running with the wolves. Although none but Bill will trust the dog, believing him savage, he leads Bill safely through many dangers, eventually bringing about the capture

of the rustlers, who have been terrorizing the neighborhood.

- (4) A teen-aged baby sitter falls in love with the baby's father's brother, thinking he is the father, suffers for some time, but, as the hilarious complication is finally resolved, gets her man.
- (5) By force of hard work, John Dolliver builds the Upper Sheboygan brewery, so founding the great Wisconsin beer industry. He becomes a leading figure in the state, ending his career as Governor, but loses his beloved because beer came first.
- (6) A young radio advertising executive gets the chance of his life plugging puffed oatmeal, only to fall in love with the heiress of a puffed wheat company.

I hasten to add that this hypothetical submission is made by one of the better known agents in this industry, who also shall be hypothetical.

To start at the beginning:—Both the story editor and the agent are middlemen in the motion picture industry, made necessary by the abundance of writers and stories and by the huge number of pictures that must be produced annually. Ideally their functions should interlock, for both should represent steps in a process of selection. Clearly the average producer, be he independent or a hiring of the majors, cannot, in addition to performing all his other duties, plough through the morass of available material; and so he must employ a story editor whose sole activity should be to search for a story suited to the producer's needs and talents. But the story editor, no matter how many analysts he may have aiding him, is also not capable of handling the situation. He must come more and more to

rely upon the submissions of the many reputable agencies. The agent, in turn, should try, broadly speaking, to handle only professional material that shows taste, originality, and technical adroitness. (The good writer may well lament the necessity for these middlemen—but he can console himself by remembering that both must sell his work in order to keep their jobs.)

SO far idealism. The actuality is indicated in the six stories listed.

Apart from their merit as stories (how many acceptable pictures are made from material not much better than these is another discussion), the agent who would submit them en bloc is, because he has neglected to be selective, failing to work in either the writer's interest or the producer's or his own for that matter. True, he might apologize for the submission if it were made to the story department of a major studio on the grounds that the needs of a major are supposed to be insatiable and that a staff of analysts is always ready to read a multiplicity of stories. But such apology is not easily substantiated; for even in the largest major, the individual picture comes down to the individual producer, and the story editor is by that limited in his choice. Nor are the specific requirements, either story or budgetary, of the various majors a secret.

In making the same submission to an independent, the agent shows utter incapacity, since the story needs of each independent are simple, governed by the personality of the producer, and can be ascertained by a telephone call. . . . And how he can explain to his clients his non-selective presentation of their work should give him

by Hugh MacMullan



nightmares:—such presentation is not only not creative, it is bad business.

LET us analyze these stories to see how non-selective the agent has been. (I apologize for wasting your time with such tawdry material,—mine is so wasted daily.) Stories one and five probably deserve the most consideration, since they present basic situations which can be used, even if it be necessary to discard the entire development provided by the writers. To realize either would probably be rather expensive. (For this you will have to take my word, but as submitted to me, story one could safely be budgeted at one million—story five at three million.) Both would require the services of a large and skillful cast; both would certainly need the talent of an excellent director; and both would demand, and for a long period of time, the most inventive screenwriters. Clearly they are properties that can appeal only to a company with large resources, both creative and financial.

Stories four and six, though it seems to me preposterous that either should be considered as serious efforts, could nonetheless be developed into minor comedies—and if anyone doubt me, let them write down the basic idea of *Three Men On A Horse* or *Sitting Pretty*. But the company who might be interested in this material (particularly if it be an independent) would not normally be intrigued by stories one and five. There is a certain story consistency, even in the majors, so that an agent's submission can be guided, — except in various broad types that appeal to everyone;—as an example, *Little Women* could hardly be a Warner Bros. picture; *The*

Treasure of the Sierra Madre would never appear on the Paramount list. With the independents this consistency is even more marked. So that one can safely say that the independent who is geared to story five could not conceivably be interested by story six.

STORIES two and three are, of course, beyond the pale—at least, the pale built by all self-respecting producers. To be sure, there is a market for such material, and probably an economically justifiable market, but such sub-marginal trash could hardly appeal to any producer whose attention was caught by one and five, or even remotely arrested by four and six.

From the writer's viewpoint this analysis should be disturbing. Here in one batch, submitted to one company on one day by one agent, and I repeat a very reputable hypothetical agent, are stories ranging from incompetent to bearable, stories whose budgetary requirements vary from ninety thousand to three million. Wherein is any of the involved six writers honestly represented? Apparently the agent assembles his material without reason, not bothering to sell, not representing his clients. He is satisfied if National Pictures, or Equity Productions, or Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have read his list. But the three are all removedly unhappy, and so should the writers be.

WHAT then is the solution? And here I must be very personal. After one such submission, I wrote the agent and said I would be delighted to tell him or one of his associates exactly what our story needs

were (and let me say again that this is not of one agent that I write—his name also is legion). In reply he telephoned, and, though verbally incoherent, I tried to explain what we would buy. His answer to me was a deluge of material, totally unrelated to our conversation, also totally unrelated to our story needs, which I had tried to explain. As a consequence, any envelope bearing his (legion's) name is greeted with shudders in our office, — there is a predisposition against reading his material, and the writers who are his clients are handicapped by his illustrious name.

AND so I hope the solution is clear. The function of the agent on this merry-go-round is to determine what material that is submitted to him has sufficient merit to pass on, then to investigate the needs of each company to see where that material best fits. If he should do so, he will truly serve his clients. For it does no writer any good to be submitted to RKO, if RKO is not interested in the sort of material with which he works; there is no glory in a rejection slip, nor is a career built by saying "Fox liked it, but couldn't see their way . . ."

As the story editor for an independent, I can only indicate the grim alternative, but indicate it I will. We have now announced four pictures, a sufficient number to keep us well occupied for at least a year, and of this group only one has been bought through an agent, and she a personal friend of the producer. This is not by design—we read most carefully all submissions made to us—we do not lightly dismiss any material, for our livelihood depends on making satis-

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Iron Curtain Diary



PRECISE dates, though available, seem unimportant. Let it be enough that on a certain day in the year 1948 I was deeply involved in the problems of a New England lawyer caught up in a Haitian dilemma which neither he nor I was finding too easy to solve. But it was an interesting problem, what with voodoo and a beautiful heroine and a fistful of exciting Negroes who seemed to think liberty was something worth fighting for, even though it meant defying Napoleon and all his power. Somehow it pleased me that I would have some part in telling an all too prejudiced world that an utterly fantastic nation of Negroes had perhaps saved the very young United States from an equally fantastic Napoleonic invasion. On a certain day I relaxed with thirty fairly satisfactory pages of screen play. Twenty-four hours later I was on my way to Ottawa, Canada. And I had an entirely new and infinitely more difficult problem to solve. It was a unique problem since it involved many factors beyond the usual, the most important of which was my own conscience.

An honest man does not sell his conscience for money. An honest man does not share in Hearstian hysteria or wallow in a Peglerian pigsty. Nor does he forget his responsibilities, not only to his own country but to the world of which he is an integral part. Since I dare to consider myself an honest man, I needed to ask myself certain questions. And since—with absolutely no studio pressure—it was entirely up to me to decide whether or not I would do the story, it was imperative that I find the right answers.

My assignment was *The Iron Curtain* for Twentieth Century-Fox. Its source material was the communist espionage trials in Canada and a series of articles in the *Cosmopolitan*. My problems suddenly cleared and I knew I need to answer only one last question . . . is the story true? If not, I must refuse to write it.

On the way east I read Igor Gouzenko's articles in the *Cosmopolitan*. Since they had been ghost written, I could not decide their honesty, especially as they had appeared in a Hearst publication. None of the several other articles I read helped very much. Then finally I labored through the *Report of the Royal Commission*, some 733 pages of incredibly dull reading. Occasionally something would spark and I would mark it. I was beginning to wonder: true or not, was it the stuff of which an exciting movie could be made? Whatever else I did, I was determined to keep away from soap boxes and flag waving.

Mr. Sol Siegel, the producer, had planned to go to Ottawa with me. Unfortunately he became ill in New York so I went on alone. There began the first phase of the birth of *The Iron Curtain*. And as I stepped off the plane I wondered if it would also be the last.

IF nothing else, it began pleasantly. My first contact was Mr. Robert Forsythe, the Deputy Minister of Justice . . . and a liberal. I had had some experience with British bureaucracy early in the war, most of it pleasant, almost all of it eventually infuriatingly profitless. Mr. Forsythe was pleasant but aloof—for about

fifteen minutes. With his generous cooperation, I interviewed every single available person who had had anything to do with the case, Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers and men, Ottawa city police, editors, reporters, lawyers, ordinary civilians. I went to Gouzenko's apartment, followed the trail of his futile attempt to turn over the documents he had taken from the Soviet embassy. I even visited the Soviet embassy—from the outside. I read original Soviet documents, studied transcripts of the several trials, stacks of newspapers, pro and anti-Communist. Canadian secretaries who had done the work for the Soviet embassy staff, Canadian instructors who had taught them English, newspaper men who had interviewed them and been to their parties—all *these people* created vivid pictures of the Soviet emissaries to Canada. These people were not professional witch hunters; they were an amiable people who, it seemed to me, were more annoyed with the Russians for tricking honest Canadians into doing espionage work for Russia than for the espionage itself. The evidence was irrefutable; I was forced to believe the story true. "But," said I to myself, "no traitor will be the hero of my story." So I asked to meet Gouzenko.

Until the night before, I did not know in which of several widely separated Canadian cities we would meet. When finally I knew, I took a plane and when I left the plane I was met by an R.C.M.P. sergeant who cannot be named and taken to a place that cannot be identified. I know, however, that Gouzenko did not live there. He was, I was told, driving practically all night and would arrive at 9:30. At *precisely* 9:29, I was

by Milton Krims



standing at a window watching two cars drive slowly by, two R.C.M.P. cars as I later discovered. At *precisely* 9:30, a third car pulled up in front of the house and Igor Gouzenko hurried across the curb. Within a few minutes, we were seated opposite each other and I was asking questions. We spoke this way for several days . . . and each night he was taken away and each morning he was returned. And finally when I had exhausted every possible line of questioning, I knew I had my story. And I knew Igor Gouzenko must be a hero.

On my last day in Canada, I had an interview with Prime Minister MacKenzie King. We talked for a long time about Igor Gouzenko and Soviet espionage in Canada. In fairness to him and the Canadian government, I must say that I was advised on this, my last day, that we could expect no cooperation from official Canada in the making of this picture. Thus ended the first phase.

THE second phase began on my return to Hollywood. I had a book full of notes, photostats of documents, transcripts of trials, about nine huge books of newspaper clippings, photographs of all the people involved, detailed drawings of the interior of the Soviet embassy . . . and an idea for the story. Mr. Siegel and I discussed the idea, then presented it verbally — and vaguely — to Mr. Zanuck. Since time was pressing, Mr. Zanuck agreed to let me go right into screenplay.

It was not an easy screenplay to write. Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction. Sometimes it's even

cornier. And sometimes there is the temptation to improve on truth, to create more action, more melodrama. I fought against this temptation . . . and the producers helped for I needed only to say some story suggestion violated the truth to have it immediately discarded. Even though I be accused of the cardinal sin of producer back-patting I must mention the patience, encouragement and help given me by Sol Siegel during this trying period. Finally the script was ready to go.

The third phase began with the assignment of a director, William Wellman. Almost immediately, Wellman, Cameraman Charles Clark, Unit Manager Bob Snody, Art Director Chick Kirk and I took off for Canada to pick the locations. Since I had already been over the ground, I was able to show them everything in one day. That same night, Mr. Wellman and I left for New York.

In one day we interviewed some thirty actors, chose a number to be tested of whom three eventually played principal parts in the picture. That night we left New York to be in Hollywood the next morning. It seemed to me I had hardly gotten my bags unpacked when I was once again on my way back to Canada, this time for the actual shooting. Here I must confess to an untruth in the picture: Gouzenko's pilgrimage through the governmental and newspaper offices with the stolen documents actually took place in the hottest summer. But when we arrived in Ottawa it was snowing. We decided it wouldn't make any difference, especially since it was a hot story anyhow. Two weeks in Ottawa—where I learned to hate children in light sweaters eating ice

cream cones while I was shaking with cold under a weird assortment of borrowed woolens—two weeks and we were back in Hollywood. Some weeks later two things happened simultaneously: I finally thawed out and the picture was finished.

THEN began the last phase, the cutting. And here, too, I was part of every screening and conference with Mr. Zanuck, Mr. Siegel and the others. I must admit strange and unexpected things happened to the film we had shot. This Darryl Zanuck is a demon with shears. But eventually the mangled strips of film were pasted together, the wildness faded from the cutter's eyes and even I began to rediscover the sweet forgetfulness of sleep. And so at last *The Iron Curtain* was ready for release. The rest is an old story by now.

This is rather late in the day to say the purpose of this article is to review the writer's part in a unique project. There are some who will think it unique that a writer should have been so close to production from inception to completion. To my mind, it is the only proper way to make motion pictures. Only when writer, producer and director blend their varied talents into an enthusiastic and understanding collaboration will we begin to achieve the potential of this great medium of expression. Conversely, when each attempts to dominate the other, either out of fear or ego, we will continue to propagate mediocrity. I do not contend that *The Iron Curtain* is a perfect example of a great motion picture; far from it. I should hate to list my personal dis-

(Continued on Page 32)

E D I T O R I A L

(Continued from Page 4)

The following is a breakdown of the salary situation:

AUGUST 1948

Writers employed by Major Studios making

Less than \$300	17%	} 34%
\$300 to \$499	17%	
\$500 to \$999	20%	} 40%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	20%	
\$1,500 to \$1,999	6%	} 21%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	6%	
\$2,500 and over	9%	
Flat Deal		5%
Less than \$300	25%	} 39.5%
\$300 to \$499	14.5%	
\$500 to \$999	35%	} 50%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	15%	
\$1,500 to \$1,999	4.5%	} 10.5%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	3.5%	
\$2,500 and over	2.5%	

Significant facts which show up, in addition to the well-known decrease in employment, are the drop in number of writers on term contract (a 53% decrease since June, 1945) and the larger percentage of employed writers in the upper brackets. In the summer of 1944, 89.5% of the writers were employed at less than \$1,500 per week, while now, 74% of those employed are in this category. If you use \$1,000 as the dividing line, 74.5% of the writers employed in the summer of 1944 were making less than \$1,000 per week, while in 1948 54% are in this classification, and 46% are making \$1,000 or more. This fact does not support the rumor that writers are being forced to accept employment for less money. It would appear that writers have tended to remain at the same salary or to receive an increase rather than to be employed at a reduction in weekly salary.

Evidently the decrease in employment has hit particularly the lower and middle brackets.

The ten flat deals reported in August of 1948 ranged from \$2,250 to \$15,000 (there were two for this sum and one for \$10,000). Apparently there has been no increase in flat deals or in contracts guaranteeing a minimum number of weeks.

THE STORY MARKET

There have been many rumors that the story market has gone to pieces. The facts would seem to bear this out. From July 1st 1947 to July 1st 1948, 94 pieces of unpublished material were purchased—52½% of the total; and 85 pieces of published material—47½%, making 179 stories purchased in all. In the two and a half year period from January 1st 1945 to July 1st 1947, 147 pieces of unpublished material were bought—33.4% of the total, as against 283 published pieces—66.6% of the total.

On the surface this would appear to indicate that there is a larger interest in stories written directly for the screen. It must be pointed out, in all honesty, that the real trend is that the number of story purchases has gone down considerably, that the originals that have been bought are at lower prices and for budget pictures.

For your information there is printed in this issue an article from the *Publishers' Weekly* which has bearing on these facts.

THE CASE AGAINST THE STUDIOS

Thurman Arnold reports that the case will be heard in the New York courts on September 14th, and the producers are asking that the case be dismissed. They have engaged Samuel Rosenman to represent them.

To date \$12,764.00 has been contributed to the fund toward Judge Arnold's fee and an additional \$1,960.00 has been pledged, including the promised contribution of the Dramatists' Guild.

TELEVISION COMMITTEE

Oscar Hammerstein II appointed a twelve-man committee on each coast, representing the four guilds (Radio Writers' Guild, Dramatists' Guild, Authors' Guild, and Screen Writers' Guild) to develop a plan for writers of television. The most important question to be determined is whether a Television Guild representing League members writing directly for television should be set up. The League has taken the position that its members should license material for television rather than sell it outright and should grant rights for only one performance, but specific conditions for writers in television, rates, etc., have not yet been agreed upon; proposal that a certain minimum against a percentage of the producers' gross be the basis of payment has been suggested. Other possibilities discussed have been a percentage of the cost of the program, or one related to air time. Guild Board has been primarily interested in protecting Guild's minimum and established conditions in relation to writers employed in the production of films which may be used for Television. (Dwight Taylor, Emmet Lavery, and Jack Roberts are Guild's representatives on A.L.A. Committee.)

ECONOMIC PROGRAM COMMITTEE

This is also called the MINIMUM BASIC AGREEMENT COMMITTEE. Ernest Pascal is Chairman. A preliminary draft of a proposed agreement has been completed by the Committee. A few special provisions are still under consideration by the Committee which is composed of twenty-six members of the Guild and which has been divided into sub-committees on the Budget Field (Matt Webster, Chairman), Licensing, (Everett Freeman, Chair-

man), and Royalties (Robert Pirosh Chairman). When the Board has had an opportunity to consider the Committee's report, a membership meeting will be called for final discussion and approval before negotiations with the studios are commenced. The present agreement expires May 1st, 1949.

THE SCREEN WRITER

On May 10th the Executive Board recommended to the membership that the magazine be published on a voluntary basis. Since its inception, its cost increased until it was approximately \$2,000.00 an issue. The Board felt this expense was not justified and, with agreement of the membership instituted a new system. John Larkin was appointed Editor on the new basis, and three issues—May, June-July, and August—have been published without a paid staff. In July the cost had been reduced to \$836.65 (\$822.81 of which was for printing), but advertising and subscriptions brought an income of \$416.70, so that the actual cost to the Guild of the July issue was only \$419.95.

A committee under the chairmanship of Frank Cavett is considering ways and means of increasing the advertising and circulation revenue.

Under the plan to rotate the editorship, Leonard Spigelgass was appointed in August to replace John Larkin, and Paul Gangelin was appointed Managing Editor.

The real problem of *The Screen Writer* is to keep it a live and dynamic publication. This can be done only if it serves to instruct and inform, as a forum for the problems of the members of the Screen Writers' Guild. To do this, cogent material is essential. The editors have found that the members of the Guild are given to a great deal of promise, and considerably less performance. Unless this responsibility is felt keenly by every member of the Guild, *The Screen Writer* will either become a forum for the few or deteriorate. The Board is determined that this will not happen. It asks each member to contribute his services, his work, his ideas.

EASTERN SCREEN WRITERS

During the late spring and early summer, an organization of approximately one hundred and twenty factual film writers in New York, calling themselves the Associated Film Writers, have asked to affiliate with the Guild. Board member, Frank Cavett, and Guild counsel Morris Cohn, were sent East by the Board to negotiate the terms of affiliation. The question of autonomy, representation on the Board, voting, and finances are of primary importance. Most of these New York writers are working on *March of Time*, commercial films, or films for television. If the affiliation is accomplished, the membership of the Guild will be appreciably increased, and its scope immensely broadened. A further report will be given when details are ironed out.

MEMBERSHIP

For a long time, both the membership and the Board have been conscious of two weaknesses in our membership rulings. It has been too simple to become an active member, on the one hand; on the other, active members, through no

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fault of their own, are shifted too easily to associate membership. The Membership Committee has been working to cure both these ills, and implementing proposals will be submitted to the membership at the next general meeting.

AGENTS

A committee with Mary McCall as chairman met with the agents to discuss the Guild's proposals for an agreement with the Artists Managers' Guild providing standards as to what services the agents should perform, and what their rights and the rights of writers were, and for arbitration of differences between writers and their agents. Negotiations have completely broken down. The Artists Managers' Guild has refused our most minimum demands, and we have called off all conversations. The Board will recommend a course of action at the membership meeting.

CREDIT UNION

A Committee under the Chairmanship of Jack Natteford organized the Credit Union and succeeded in getting a charter from the Federal Government. At the organizational meeting on May 10th Frank Partos was elected President, Wells Root, Vice-President, Erwin Gelsey, Treasurer, S. K. Lauren, Secretary, Edward Eliscu, Jay Dratler and Lester Cole Board Members. To date 96 members have purchased \$7,175.75 in shares, and 21 loans to Guild members, ranging from \$200.00 to \$500.00, have been approved by the Credits Committee composed of Harold Buchman, Edmund Hartmann and Winston

Miller. Jack Natteford, Allen Boretz and Jane Murfin are the Supervisory Committee, and Richard Murphy is Chairman of the Educational Committee.

GROUP INSURANCE

Paul Gangelin's Committee was successful in getting the necessary 50% to apply for this health and accident insurance plan, so that it went into effect on June 3rd. Since that date ten members have become eligible, through illness or hospitalization, for benefits under the plan. Members have to date received checks totalling \$1558.54 on claims for illness and accidents. It is now possible to extend the Group Accident and Health Insurance Policy to the families of Guild members.

MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

This Council, made up of representatives of the independent guilds, A. F. of L. unions, and producers, was called together late in the year of 1947 and has met as problems of interest to all members of the industry have arisen. It has now worked out a plan for permanent organization and can be called together on the request of any member group. It has discussed primarily questions relating to the public relations of the industry. The most important fact is that all decisions must be made by common consent, and any one group can veto any action. At the last meeting, on July 20th, Eric Johnston discussed the financial condition of the industry. Guild representatives are Sheridan Gibney, George Seaton, Hugh Herbert, Harry Tugend, and Arthur Sheekman.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

Hugh Herbert is the Chairman of this standing committee. The other two places on the Grievance Committee are filled by Executive Board members in rotation alphabetically for each separate grievance hearing. Seven members have brought to the attention of the Guild cases which have been referred to the Grievance Committee for hearing. Two of these were settled, two are in the process of being investigated, and in three cases have been sent to the membership calling attention to the fact that certain producers have acted unfairly, or have been sub-standard in their dealings with writers, and members have been advised to use caution if they should have occasion to deal with these producers.

CONCILIATION COMMITTEE UNDER THE MINIMUM BASIC AGREEMENT

One meeting of this Permanent Conciliation Committee, which is composed of three members of the Guild and three representatives of the Producers' Association, has been held this year. This meeting was called at the request of the Guild to discuss the problem of speculative writing. The Producer members agreed to act forcefully on any specific cases brought to the attention of the Conciliation Committee.

CREDITS COMMITTEE

A new Schedule A to replace that in effect since 1940 was negotiated with the Producers' Association and went into effect on August 1st. The Credits Committee, of which Valentine Davies is Chairman, revised the rules regarding writer-producer credit, presenting them to the membership at the May 10th meeting, where they were approved.

Since November 1947, the Credits Committee and Panel (on which are 100 Guild members who have served on at least two arbitration committees previously) have handled 36 arbitrations involving writers' credits.

POLITICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Robert Ardrey is Chairman of this Committee whose function is to make recommendations to the Executive Board on legislation which may affect the Guild. The Committee considered the Mundt-Nixon Bill but voted to recommend to the Board that this Bill did not directly affect the Guild and that therefore the Guild should not take any action in regard to it. Two sub-committees have been set up: One, with Michael Blankfort as Chairman, to consider copyright problems, the other, with Borden Chase as Chairman, to bring in a plan for changes in tax legislation which would benefit writers. In this connection two members have brought to the attention of the Board rulings of Treasury Department representatives which they considered inimical to the interest of writers. In each case the Board directed its counsel, Morris Cohn, to investigate the findings of the tax representatives and to enter the hearings as *amicus curiae* for the Guild in the interest of all writers.

TELLERS COMMITTEE

John Larkin and this Committee were responsible for working out a plan for the speedy and accurate handling of voting and proxies at meetings. Ten members have been required to assist in the balloting and checking of proxies at each meeting.

PLAN FOR OBSERVING PRODUCTION

George Seaton, in an Article in *The Screen Writer* in September of 1947, proposed a plan for making it possible for interested writers to observe the shooting of a picture from beginning to end. His suggestion was that the script be made available to the writer for study before the beginning of principal photography; then the writer would observe on the set the work of the director, cameraman, etc. By arrangement with 20th Century Fox and RKO a num-

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(This is a paid advertisement; this space is donated by a friend, Stanley Bergerman)

ber of members of the Guild were given this opportunity. It is still open for members should they wish to apply through the Guild.

Mr. Seaton reports that through this system a few writers have secured employment.

EMPLOYMENT

A Committee, with Paul Gangelin as Chairman, asked that all members interested in working as writers of documentaries register their names with the Guild. This list has been submitted to a number of Producers who have requested it, as well as to Officers of the Signal Corps, who have been seeking writers of documentaries. A number of members of the Guild obtained employment as a result of this plan.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Art Arthur is Chairman—its principal activity was the organization of the press conference of Thurman Arnold on the Guild's blacklisting case.

BUILDING ASSOCIATION

The Guild has an investment of \$6,000.00 in the property on Cahuenga where offices have been built for the Publicists, Cartoonists, Film Editors, and Costumers. There is ample space for a building to house the Guild with the Radio Writers and Authors' League, and for parking space. This property has increased greatly in value since the investment was first made. From a lease to a billboard company \$108,000 will be received during the next ten years. Harry Tugend is the Guild's representative to the Board of Directors of the Building Association.

TREASURER'S REPORT

For the ten months ending July 31st 1948, the report prepared by Primoff and Company, accountants, shows that the Guild has a net worth of \$75,282.07, which does not include the liability of \$20,000.00 still due Thurman Arnold as a legal fee. Income for this period, including contributions toward the fee for the blacklisting case, has been \$82,131.97. Expenditures for *The Screen Writer* have amounted to \$23,497.99, but since there has been some income from ads and subscriptions, the cost to the Guild has totaled \$18,397.60. All expenses for operation of the Guild, including the cost of *The Screen Writer*, have amounted to \$66,707.41.

Now it is Fall again and the pace accelerates. Problems that face the Guild as an entity affect you as an individual. It is inconceivable that they can be taken lightly. Unless each member recognizes his obligation to keep informed and to serve, the Guild is dangerously weakened. It is the duty of every writer to attend meetings in person and keep his knowledge of Guild affairs fresh. To vote by proxy unless absolutely essential is to be derelict. The Board reiterates what it has always felt: the Guild's strength and survival depend upon the unity and perseverance of its membership.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

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C R e s t v i e w 6 - 1 0 7 1

Keith Sward

(Continued from Page 10)

She is paralyzed from the waist down. The two ailing souls cure one another and are well on the road to wedlock and living happily ever after, all within a space of three or four hours. Psychotherapy? Or was I witnessing a new variation on an old Hollywood theme? To wit: Come what may—and this goes for the most serious emotional illness—true love conquers all!

Hypnosis has already become entrenched as one of Hollywood's favorite short-cuts to mental health. It is hypnotic spells that do the trick in freeing *Janet Ames* from her paralyzing guilt. The patient in this case regains the use of her limbs after taking a number of quickies to the unconscious with a capital "U."

To be sure, there is such a thing as brief psychotherapy. Our knowledge of this process is in its infancy. A few of the established short-cuts in mental healing are sometimes the preferred modes of treatment. Hypnosis and narcosynthesis, for example, have proved their value in the treatment of certain cases suffering from situational shock. But as things now stand, at least for the treatment of the deeper civilian neuroses, there is no adequate substitute for the process which compels therapist and patient to sweat it out together. And in the present state of our ignorance, mother nature makes haste slowly as a rule. Could it be that these overnight cures, when dramatized on the screen, might serve to raise false hopes in the hearts of countless persons who are psychologically ill and groping desperately for relief?

ANALYZING THE ANALYST

OUR mental healers of the screen have such multiple personalities that they defy classification. But this much can be said for the analyst as an emerging film type. He is cursed with one of the traits he sees in many of his patients (in real life). He is over-compliant. He does anything to please. He personifies on the screen

whatever role a particular script happens to require.

We know that in everyday life there is something unique about the relationship that obtains between a psychotherapist and the person who comes to him for help. There is also reason to feel that the successful psychotherapist has certain special personal attributes. It is not easy to define the exact nature of this therapeutic relationship or to put into words just what it takes to become a skillful specialist in this relatively new field. But this much is sure. Hollywood has not made it any easier for its audiences to get a clear picture of the psychiatrist either as a professional person or as a human being.

On this score, most of the psychological films I have seen deal with negatives; they portray the therapist as he is not in everyday life. The psychiatrist of *Shock* is a villain or a psychotic, capable of committing a murder or two without batting an eye. A wife about to be strangled by her husband effects the cure in *Secret Beyond the Door*. In *Janet Ames* we had the analysts to end all analysts, two sick laymen. The therapist of *Rage In Heaven* is on the eccentric side. The "Vienna type," no doubt. In the film *Possessed* our man is the good little father. He is sweet, all-wise, whimsical, and a little weary of the world.

If the studios have come up with anything like a stereotype in their picturization of the psychologist, it is the image of the mental wonder-worker who is half physician and half super-sleuth. We see this double personality at work with clues criminal and clues psychological in *Spellbound*, *Rage in Heaven*, *Dark Mirror* and *The Locket*. Vienna and Scotland Yard rolled into one. What fun!

Incidentally, why are so many of the "psychiatrics" straight murder thrillers? (*Shock*, *Spellbound*, *The Locket*, *Rage in Heaven*, *Dark Mirror*, *Possessed*, *Fear in the Night*, and *Secret Beyond the Door*.) Is Hollywood cashing in on a current fashion in the pulp field? Is it following the lead of the publishers of crime fiction? As the pulp writers have been handling their material for some time,

detectives have become psychologically minded; the brain has been displacing the gun.

Witnessing still other films of a psychological cast, I have been overwhelmed by the sexual charms of this or that magician of the soul. Images come to mind of Ingrid Berman, Rosalind Russell, Joan Bennett, Melvyn Douglas and Brian Aherne. Certainly *Spellbound* and *The Guilt of Janet Ames* set me to thinking that the analytic relationship is by no means always disinterestedly professional. Or with this pair of films is it, again, simply a case of old wine in new bottles? Boy still meets girl. Only the locale has changed. A hospital or a sanitarium is filling in for the drawing room and the park bench.

I doubt that most psychotherapists would want their persons or their role in society glorified on the screen. My medical and psychological colleagues (myself included) are neither gods nor fools. All of us can stand a little lampooning. In fact, we have asked for it. But I see no point in making a freak of the psychotherapist, unless that is Hollywood's intention. If the picture makers turned to abnormal psychology in a freak search for the ludicrous and the bizarre—which is as good a premise as any I have been able to discover—then their portrayals of the analysts and his co-workers make sense.

WHY THE URGE FOR ANALYTIC THEMES?

ONE of the reasons for Hollywood's discovery of things psychic, I suspect, is social or economic in character. I should say it hinges on the existence of the star values. One of the major costs of the motion picture business consists of investments in leading actors and actresses. Obviously such properties must pay off. The stars of the trade must be kept busy. Hence, the never ending search for new roles or for new folk heroes whose lives and problems can be dramatized on the screen.

The mental healer is a contemporary folk hero. He is a person who is supposed to know the answers to some

of the dilemmas that beset the modern world. He also has a certain aura about him. This hero of the 20th century has a special appeal for that portion of our middle- or upper middle-classes which is conspicuously insecure and introspective.

From the standpoint of casting alone, the psychological film provides the answer to one of a producer's many prayers. Pictures of this character allow the industry to put new life into certain investments that show a declining yield. With a film built around the doings of an analyst, male or female, the studios have a happy vehicle for the star who is fading. Cast as a psychologist or psychiatrist, the actor beyond his prime may be slightly worn, but—thanks to analysis and that sort of thing—sex and glamor can still be worked in.

The psychiatrist-as-hero has still another lure for Hollywood. He can be used, as a screen type, to resolve one of the industry's own central conflicts. He can be tailored to pass for a "safe" modern hero. He gives the screenwriter what he needs: certain problems to hang a story on. At the same time this newcomer to the screen "keeps out of trouble." He has been drawn, thus far, to fit the needs of an industry with an obsession. This mono-mania is the industry's compulsion to keep on the good side of everyone, to avoid controversial ma-

terial, and to ignore reality and thought content.

It is no accident in my opinion that all the psychiatrists I have seen on the screen are narrowly drawn. They are, to a man, clinicians concerned only with the problems of individual and family psychopathology. It is Oedipus whom they blame for most of our troubles. The psychiatrist of this description gives no thought to the realm of social psychology. He is busy considering the ills of disordered individuals rather than those of a disordered world. He may be counted on to look with a fishy eye, if he looks at all, at the countless, very real conflicts and tensions that abound in the wider, extra-familial world in which we move. That, as I see it, is one of the chief functions of the psychiatrist-as-hero transported to the screen. He is a psychological Mr. Fixit who knows where, in the total scheme of things, to look for trouble, and where not to look.

What happened when Hollywood had the boldness to treat the subject of psychopathology from a broader point of view? *Crossfire* and *Gentlemen's Agreement* gave us some answers. These two films, apart from their artistic excellence, were studies in social psychology. They took a look at certain neurotic social attitudes or at a certain sicknesses of the mind that infect the whole social order. At least one of these pictures was attacked

in certain quarters because of this very fact.

HOLLYWOOD IN CONFLICT

IF the point holds—that in the psychiatrist Hollywood found a modern folk hero who is handy to have around because of his innocence—that fact alone can not explain why our current psychological films are so bad. The content of individual and family psychology, even with the broader themes of social psychology ruled out, is rich enough in dramatic material. Yet the fact remains that the average "psychiatric" film is a puerile and mediocre product.

I see a little humor in this situation. Critics of every hue have long maintained that standard Hollywood fare is incredible and second-rate. Then along comes an infant science which is supposed to reveal the secrets of human behavior, and as a result of the adaptation of this new knowledge to the screen, the plots and characterizations conceived in Hollywood become (if this is possible) still more unreal and even more childish.

If such a paradox truly exists, what accounts for it? Could it be that psychology is what the doctor ordered for an industry that has jumpy nerves and hates to part with quite a number of its flights from reality? In one sense, I regard the pseudo-psychiatric

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film as the perfect recipe for the producer who lacks talent or perception or is frightened or irresponsible or just tired. With ordinary subject-matter or the stuff that stories and plays have always been made of, the writer or director can not ignore certain universal canons of plot construction and character development. Is he engaged to take the same pains when he tries his hand at a script that is ostensibly psychological? I have a suspicion that with the birth of the psychiatric film, a new Hollywood formula came into being. It reads something like this: "Call it psychology and anything goes! If a picture concerns analysis or the doings of people who are emotionally off center, the sky's the limit!" In other words, don't a good many of our recent psychiatric pictures represent simply bad writing and a substitute for thinking and creative effort? After all, who is in a position to challenge Hollywood's version of This New Deep Thing called psychology or analysis?

A PROGNOSIS

IS there any hope for the Hollywood "psychiatric"? Has psychology or analysis anything to offer to

the screenwriter and his co-workers in the motion picture industry?

My first hunch about the psychological films of the future is a negative one. It is a conviction on my part that a knowledge of psychology alone will not prop up the writer or director who, because of his own inherent limitations, is neither a craftsman nor an artist at his line of work. As for the picture maker who intends to mine psychopathology for tricks or trappings or for odds and ends that help him to latch on to a current fad, I wish he would go elsewhere for his inspiration. His output in the psychological realm will continue to be dull and unimaginative. Moreover, it may do some harm from the standpoint of mental hygiene.

The makers of our coming psychological films—if have them we must—might take the trouble to learn a few of the facts of life in this new sphere. When dealing with psychiatric themes thus far, Hollywood seems to have plucked its psychology out of the air. It made up a brand of psychiatry all its own. The studios played fast and loose with elementary facts on which all serious students of psychology are agreed.

I see no future whatsoever for the films which make psychotherapy an integral part of their plots. The story values simply aren't there, in my opinion. The pictures of tomorrow that are centered on this phase of the psychological problem will probably remain, even if well done, imitative and stultified.

The best psychological films to come, I suspect, will resemble the best of the "psychiatrics" that we have seen up to now. They will follow the lead of pictures like *The Seventh Veil*. The makers of this film know something about human nature. They justify their characters psychologically. What more important standard is there—other than a writer's acute understanding of conflict and motivation—for judging the merits of any dramatic work? And come to think of it, the great story-tellers of the past did pretty well without benefit of a knowledge of modern psychology and psychoanalysis.

I wonder if it would pay the screen-

writer or producer who is going psychiatric in a big way to forget about psychology and analysis as such and get back to people and the art of telling stories? I have a feeling that the art of spinning yarns hasn't changed much even if our formal knowledge of psychology has.

If I were very cynical, I would predict that few, if any, of the psychological films of the future will amount to much. My pessimism in that case would rest on a fear that art and thought in America as a whole and in Hollywood in particular are on the defensive. I would also be mindful of the fact that the motion picture industry is hemmed in by sundry pressures and censorship restrictions. I would likewise consider the case hopeless because of the industry's own pet neurosis, its perennial lack of nerve and its need to please everyone—the compulsion that leads to compromises that please no one.

I am not completely cynical, yet, however. For one thing I respect the immense creative talent that Hollywood owns and makes use of all too infrequently. Moreover, I am convinced that the psychological film, if well handled, embodies a formula that would allow the industry a wide range of freedom even within the existing framework of censorship. Any number of emotional problems and the solutions to these problems can be shown on the screen realistically and entertainingly. If and when such material is presented in an adult way, Hollywood may discover it is freer than it thinks.

KEITH SWARD, a practicing clinical psychologist, holds a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. He is the author of the recently published The Legend of Henry Ford.

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"Clichés — I Love You" or "What's New To You Too?"

By

E. EDWIN MORAN

ME and my g-- d--- teeth. Here's how it was. . . .

I'm working on an assignment, an original, or maybe it will become a book, or let's say an idea for a radio show.

Well, anyway, I'm with paper on a desk and a pencil in my mouth (thanks to a quick rewrite at 20th for the paper and pencil—not the mouth) so the idea feels pretty good and the description is interesting, but comes the dialogue—Cliché—Cliché—Cliché.

I'm remembering the articles in various copies of *The Screen Writer* magazine written by my peers (pardon the cliché) about how they say about all the clichés in all the pictures, and how I should if I want to be like them, (excuse the cliché) I should watch out and not use any, so always being one to want I should improve myself and maybe get to be ditto like them, (no cliché intended) I start to write cliché-less dialogue or words

into sentences they shouldn't smell from clichés. So that's how it happens about why I say me and my g-- d--- dentist, because my idea is about a dentist and where can you go to not hear dentist talk without clichés, of course to a dentist, which I do.

Have you got a good memory for remembering things? I have. Can you remember the things people say after they say them, like they said them? Me too.

THE office of the dentist is like an office with an anteroom which is before you get to the main room which is his office, although he has another room which is his office where a girl sits when she isn't standing over you when he works on you so when you gag she makes sure you are good and embarrassed.

So I walk in and first off the girl whom I will call his, (the dentist's) secretary says, now listen good, she

says: "Well, Mr. Moran, you're a sight for sore eyes." She said it—I heard it. I remember it—"a sight for sore eyes"—and in a dentist's office.

Here's my argument: How would I sound if I walked in an oculist's office and the girl says to me: "Well Mr. Moran, you're a sight for sore teeth." See what I mean? If people talk clichés, that's the way a writer should write it, otherwise if you don't write what people say, people will say there's a fellow who has a lot of talent (and nice personality too) who don't write only what people don't say.

SO in conclusion, I want to finish by saying it's all right to avoid clichés (like my peers—pardon the cliché again) I say we should avoid them, but remember also that without clichés a fellow could spend the rest of his life looking for a new dentist.

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F. Hugh Herbert

(Continued from Page 7)

agreed with her. He was, as previously recorded, devoted to Mrs. Brill, and he was getting fed up to the back teeth with his failure to make the columns of *Time*. Tears of remorse and chagrin dimmed his eyes.

Bravely, albeit with a certain diffidence, he confided to Mrs. Brill the strange obsession which had bedevilled him. Mrs. Brill patted his cheek affectionately and told him he was a silly old darling. Why should he bother his silly old head because a silly old magazine refused to print his wonderful letters?

Mr. Brill said she was absolutely right and he was going to cancel his subscription immediately and just forget about the goddam magazine.

Mr. Brill blew his nose on a sheet of Kleenex and felt much better. He said that he felt as if an incubus had been exorcised from him. Mrs. Brill did not quite know what this meant but she was glad he felt better.

Suddenly Mr. Brill jumped up and asked Mrs. Brill for the key to the attic. "I have a complete file of *Time* from the very first issue," he said, "and it must be worth hundreds if not thousands of dollars. I'm going to sell it."

"Oh dear," said Mrs. Brill. "I wouldn't do that if I were you."

Mr. Brill said that he most certainly was going to do that very thing. Until all traces of *Time* were removed from his house, and, let her bear in mind, at a handsome profit, he would not feel free of his obsession (or incubus).

MRS. BRILL, stalling for time, said that she didn't know where the key to the attic was. This was a palpable lie. Mrs. Brill was a meticulous housekeeper and always knew where everything was and Mr. Brill knew that she always knew. Mr. Brill testily demanded the key and Mrs. Brill, after pretending to look in the little drawer of the bureau where the stamps were kept, finally gave it to him. She planned, after

Mr. Brill had discovered that there were conspicuous lapses in the file of *Time*, to pass the buck to the upstairs maid. She figured, accurately, that Mr. Brill would raise all kinds of hell, and she planned to recompense the upstairs maid for the bawling out she would receive by raising her salary ten dollars a month, an increase which had been promised her since Christmas anyway. This plan she hastily explained to the upstairs-maid as soon as Mr. Brill went upstairs. Haste was mandatory, since Mr. Brill would undoubtedly discover the incompleteness of his files almost immediately. Only last week Mrs. Brill had thrown out *Time* for 1934 through 1941. She needed the cartons for that lovely set of Limoges china the Kentons had given them for their anniversary.

She had barely concluded her bargain with the upstairs-maid when Mr. Brill, his voice hoarse with emotion, bellowed from the attic.

"Coming, dear," said Mrs. Brill and hurried upstairs. She found Mr. Brill, his face flushed with anger, rummaging among the neatly packed boxes, barrels and cartons.

"Where the hell are all my *Times*?" said Mr. Brill.

"I don't know, dear," said Mrs. Brill. "Aren't they *there*?"

"You know goddam well they're not *there*," said Mr. Brill, pacing up and down in a fury.

This was an unfortunate gesture, because he missed his footing and fell down the attic steps breaking his neck in the descent. Mrs. Brill screamed and had to be given sedatives.

The following week Mr. Brill, who had failed to do so in life, finally made *Time* under the heading of "*Milestones*."

DIED—Balding, bellicose Arnold Brill, 57, wealthy putt-puttycoon (see *Business*) of a broken neck sustained in a fall from attic stairs (see *Housing*.)

The difference between a moral man and a man of honor is that the latter regrets a discreditable act even when it has worked.

—H. L. Mencken, *Prejudices II*

Leonard Spigelgass

(Continued from Page 11)

a number that had broken even, and four miserable, dire failures. Over the years, he'd worked hard, given money's worth, accommodated himself to studio needs, been, in general, a good boy. Nobody could say he wasn't a part of the industry on record, performance, and tenure of office. Yet nobody asked *him* what was wrong with the picture business. Nobody ever said, "Mr. Clews, you've written a bunch of scripts. You're an old hand at plots and dialogue, and conferences. Anything bothering you, bud? Got any suggestions?"

He wondered what he'd say to that, and, in free association, the face of Mr. Brady came to him, and then, in quick succession, the face of Mr. Cafferty, and the face of Mr. Gort, who, at that very moment, was on Stage 14 directing Miss Lind in a scene from his last script, and, of course, the face of Miss Lind. And there followed a lot of faces that weren't Mr. Brady's, Mr. Cafferty's, Mr. Gort's, or Miss Lind's, but who, in his life, had occupied identical relationships. And the faces were full of talk! talk! talk! yat-a-tat-yat-a-tat-yat-a-tat. And they blurred and became indistinct, and a great moment of clarity came over Mr. Clews. He could save the industry fortunes. He could get up now and go to the Big Producer Lunch, and say, "Gentlemen, I've got a way to shave script costs, and prevent them from piling upon shelves. It's so simple, gentlemen, a kind of magic. Just," and he would smile, as he said this, to show that his heart was full, not of personal rancor, but good will, "just tell the writer who his boss is."

HE could go on. He could point to what he was doing now. He and Mr. Brady had come to a meeting of minds, and would do a script. Then it would go to Mr. Cafferty who would hate it, and demand changes. Then he would go to Mr. Gort (if not Gort, another Gort) who would disagree with Brady, and Cafferty, and demand other changes. Then,

freshly mimeographed and polished, it would go to Miss Lind, who would demand more changes. Why didn't it go to Miss Lind in the first place? Weeks, months, saved. Or to Mr. Gort, in the first place? Or, Mr. Cafferty in the first place? How simple. How beautifully, wonderfully simple. Decide who the boss is. Put the writer with him. A fresh enthusiastic writer, working with a fresh enthusiastic boss, firmly, decisively, perhaps even with inspiration. Dear, dear, God, what money saved, what crispness retained, what joy-in-work revised!

MR. CLEWS smiled to himself, and almost decided to get up from the couch. But, in an instant, he let his head fall back on the pillow. What business was it of his? Mr. Brady, Mr. Cafferty, and Miss Lind, and New York, were all smarter than he. They knew what they were doing. If they wanted a script to take six months to write, when it could be done in three, surely that was *their* affair. What did he know about it, after all? He was only the writer.

He tasted the curry ravioli in his mouth, and felt the warmth of the August afternoon, and thought he would write a piece about it for *The Screen Writer*, and decided not to, and dozed.

Hugh MacMullan

(Continued from Page 13)

fyng films. But we find we can better achieve our purpose if we rely on ourselves, looking inward to see what our needs are, rather than in hopelessly opening our morning packages. This is not as it should be—it is not the way we would like it—and it certainly ignores the freelance writer who, from the top of Laurel Canyon, hopes to see his work eventually projected on a screen.

HUGH MacMULLAN, currently story editor for National Pictures and lecturer in Theatre Arts (Motion Pictures) at U.C.L.A. As Lt. Cmdr., USNR, writer director and producer of many Navy films. Formerly dialogue director Warner Bros., and assistant to Jacob Wilk.

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—John Jewel

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—Thomas Jefferson

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Paul S. Nathan

(Continued from Inside Front Cover)

fine picture made from Hartzell Spence's *One Foot in Heaven*. (The answer to that was easy and singularly gratifying: I had.)

The mail also brought a brochure from Paul R. Reynolds & Son, agents, with the accompanying information that all the important Hollywood studios were going to get copies, too. Subject of the elegant Reynolds circular is Agnes Sligh Turnbull's *The Bishop's Mantle* (MACMILLAN). After presenting the book's sales history and bestseller record (it's still going strong ten months after publication), this unusual piece of promotional literature demands accusingly: "*Why has Hollywood ignored The Bishop's Mantle?*"

"1. Is it because the last Protestant film *One Foot In Heaven*, was a flop?

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"3. Is it because the agents have failed to ask an exorbitant price for the entertainment rights?

"*Perhaps Hollywood is afraid of the book itself?*"

"1. Is the picture industry afraid of making a moving religious story which contains no pageantry?

"2. Is the picture industry afraid of making a clergyman human?

"3. Are the studio heads incapable of visualizing a drama in which 'no one chews scenery'?"

Having thus established an atmosphere conducive to doing business, the Reynoldses and the Hollywood co-representatives, Lewis & Molson, Inc., proceed to state their terms. Computing the price of screen rights at 50 cents for every copy of the book sold in the original \$3 edition up to the Monday before the day of closing, they figure that the price at the present moment now stands roughly at \$46,500.

If this new sales technique pays off, we can expect a complete revolution in agency methods. Gone will be the old pretense of politeness, the coy

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wink of the literary merchandiser from behind the half-furled fan. Hereafter it'll be a simple matter, first, of stunning your movie executive with insult, then knocking him down, sitting on him, and forcing the fountain pen into his trembling fingers.

John Dales, Jr.

(Continued from Page 5)

in when the strike was called. The actor's former contract will be reinstated and, at the option of the producer, may be extended for a period equal to the length of the strike.

There are several possible legal termination dates and "escape clauses" in our new agreement with the producers. If the producers should decide to license for television any theatre film made and released between August 1, 1948, and December 1, 1950, the Guild may cancel the entire contract on 60 days' notice after January 1, 1949. Negotiations are to start shortly on wage scales and conditions for films made exclusively for television, as well as on some contract

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player conditions, re-use of stock shots and other related points, and if agreement is not reached on these matters by the end of 1948, the Guild has the right to terminate the entire contract on 90 days' notice. The Guild also has the right to reopen the contract on October 1, 1949 on all matters concerning television and on wages and hours for all actors. The contract terminates on December 31, 1950.

This brief article has made no attempt to list in detail all the points covered in our new agreement with the producers. We obtained a number of improvements for day players and weekly free lance players including such matters as an increase from a quarter-check to a half-check for cancelled "weather-permitting" calls and elimination of the "on-or-about" starting date unless a contract is delivered to the actor at least one week ahead of the starting date of his engagement.

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A LISTING OF SCREEN WRITERS' CREDITS
EARNED ON FEATURE PRODUCTIONS
OF CURRENT AND RECENT RELEASE

CREDITS

JULY 15, 1948 TO AUGUST 15, 1948

A

GERALD D. ADAMS
Joint Screenplay (with Gerald Geraghty) THE PLUNDERERS, Rep.

MICHAEL ARLEN
Character Basis DEVILS CARGO (Falcon Productions) Film Classics

B

SY BARTLETT
Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with John Lee Mahin) DOWN TO THE SEA IN SHIPS, Fox

WILLIAM BOWERS
Sole Screenplay THE COUNTESS OF MONTE CRISTO, U.I.

OSCAR BRODNEY
Joint Screenplay (with John Grant) MEXICAN HAYRIDE, U.I.

PETER R. BROOKE
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Jack Roberts) CATALINA INTERLUDE (S) Par.

HARRY BROWN
Joint Screenplay (with Kenneth Gamet) WAKE OF THE RED WITCH, Rep.

ELIZABETH BURBRIDGE
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Carl K. Hittleman) THE RETURN OF WILDFIRE (Crestwood Pictures), Screen Guild

FRANK BURT
Joint Story (with Robert Libott) THE STRANGE MRS. CRANE (John Sutherland Prod.) U.A.

C

ROY CHANSLOR
Sole Story THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET, W.B.

D

RONALD DAVIDSON
Joint Story and Screenplay (with William Lively) RANGE RENEGADES, Mono.

ARTHUR DREIFUSS
Joint Story (with George Plympton) and Sole Screenplay MANHATTAN ANGEL, (Kay Pictures) Col.

E

HARRY J. ESSEX
Additional Dialogue TWENTY-NINE CLUES, Eagle-Lion

F

MELVIN FRANK
Joint Story (with Norman Panama) A SOUTHERN YANKEE, MGM

G

KENNETH GAMET
Joint Screenplay (with Harry Brown) WAKE OF THE RED WITCH, Rep.

GERALD GERAGHTY
Joint Screenplay (with Gerald Adams) THE PLUNDERERS, Rep.

MAURICE J. GERAGHTY
Sole Screenplay BLACK VELVET, U.I.

JAMES EDWARD GRANT
Sole Story THE PLUNDERERS, Rep.

JOHN GRANT
Joint Screenplay (with Oscar Brodney) MEXICAN HAYRIDE, U.I.

H

NORMAN S. HALL
Story and Screenplay ROSE OF THE YUKON, Rep.

JOHN C. HIGGINS
Joint Screenplay (with Crane Wilbur) TWENTY-NINE CLUES, Eagle-Lion

ELIZABETH HILL
Joint Story (with Louis Stevens) STREETS OF LAREDO, Par.

CARL K. HITTLEMAN
Joint Screenplay and Story (with Elizabeth Burbridge) THE RETURN OF WILDFIRE, (Crestwood Pictures), Screen Guild

NORMAN HOUSTON
Sole Story and Screenplay GUN RUNNERS, RKO

RUSSELL HUGHES
Sole Screenplay THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET, W.B.

K

CURTIS KENYON
Joint Screenplay (with Frank S. Nugent) TULSA, Eagle-Lion

L

RING LARNER, JR.
Sole Screenplay AFFAIRS OF ADELAIDE, Fox

ROBERT LIBOTT
Joint Story (with Frank Burt) THE STRANGE MRS. CRANE (John Sutherland Prod.) U.A.

WILLIAM LIVELY
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Ronald Davidson) RANGE RENEGADES, Mono.
Sole Screenplay DAUGHTERS OF THE JUNGLE, Rep.

BARRE LYNDON
*Contributor to Screenplay Construction, THE ACCUSED, Hal Wallis, Par.
*Academy Bulletin Only

M

AL MARTIN
Sole Screenplay THE STRANGE MRS. CRANE (John Sutherland Prod.) U.A.

DON MARTIN
Sole Screenplay DEVILS CARGO (Falcon Prod.) Film Classics
Joint Screenplay (with Joseph Carole) TRIPLE THREAT, Kay Pictures

SETON I. MILLER
Story and Screenplay FIGHTER SQUADRON, W.B.

FRED MYTON
Sole Story and Screenplay MIRACULOUS JOURNEY, Sig Neufeld Pictures, Inc.

N

SAM NEWMAN
Sole Story and Screenplay THE SHANGHAI CHEST, Mono.

SLOAN NIBLEY
Sole Story and Screenplay THE FAR FRONTIER, Rep.

FRANK S. NUGENT
Joint Screenplay (with Curtis Kenyon) TULSA, Eagle-Lion

P

NORMAN PANAMA
Joint Story (with Melvin Frank) A SOUTHERN YANKEE, MGM

JOHN PATRICK
Sole Screenplay ENCHANTMENT, Samuel Goldwyn

GEORGE PLYMPTON
Joint Story (with Arthur Dreifuss) MANHATTAN ANGEL, Kay Pictures, Col.

R

MARTIN RACKIN
Additional Dialogue FIGHTER SQUADRON, W.B.

WALTER REISCH
Sole Story THE COUNTESS OF MONTE CRISTO, U.I.

ROBERT RICHARDS
Sole Screenplay ACT OF VIOLENCE, MGM

JACK ROBERTS
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Peter R. Brooke) CATALINA INTERLUDE, (S) Par.

TIM RYAN
*Contributor to Dialogue THE SHANGHAI CHEST, Mono.
*Academy Bulletin Only

S

ARTHUR ST. CLAIRE
Sole Story and Screenplay WOMEN IN THE NIGHT (So. Calif. Pictures) Film Classics

WILLIAM B. SACKHEIM
Sole Story and Screenplay NIGHT BEAT, W.B.

In this listing of screen credits, published monthly in THE SCREEN WRITER, the following abbreviations are used:
COL — Columbia Pictures Corporation; E-L — Eagle-Lion Studios; FOX — 20th Century-Fox Film Corporation; GOLDWYN — Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.; MGM — Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios; MONO — Monogram Pictures Corporation; PAR — Paramount Pictures, Inc.; PRC — Producers Releasing Corporation of America; REP — Republic Productions, Inc.; RKO — RKO Radio Studios, Inc.; ROACH — Hal E. Roach Studio, Inc.; UA — United Artists Corporation; UNI-INT'L — Universal-International Pictures; UWP — United World Pictures; WB — Warner Brothers Studios. (S) designates screen short.

GERALD SCHNITZER

Joint Story and Screenplay (with Edmond Seward and Bert Lawrence) BOWERY COMEBACK, Mono.

EDMOND SEWARD

Joint Story and Screenplay (with Gerald Schnitzer and Bert Lawrence) BOWERY COMEBACK, Mono.

SOL SHOR

Sole Story DAUGHTER OF THE JUNGLE, Rep.

LEO SOLOMON

Joint Contributor (with Joseph Quillan) to VARIETY TIME, RKO

LOUIS STEVENS

Joint Story (with Elizabeth Hill) STREETS OF LAREDO, Par.

ARTHUR STRAWN

Joint Screenplay (with Philip Yordan) LAST OF THE BAD MEN, (Allied Artists) Mono.

T**MAURICE TOMBRAGEL**

Sole Story and Screenplay BOSTON BLACKIE'S CHINESE VENTURE, Col.

HARRY TUGEND

Sole Screenplay A SOUTHERN YANKEE, MGM

W**CHARLES MARQUIS WARREN**

Sole Screenplay STREETS OF LAREDO, Par.

CRANE WILBUR

Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with John C. Higgins) TWENTY-NINE CLUES, Eagle-Lion.

Sole Screenplay CANON CITY, Eagle-Lion

RICHARD WORMSER

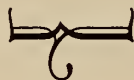
Sole Story TULSA, Eagle-Lion

Y**HAL YATES**

Sole Screenplay, Edgar Kennedy Short, VARIETY TIME, RKO

PHILIP YORDAN

Joint Screenplay (with Arthur Strawn) LAST OF THE BAD MEN (Allied Artists) Mono.



Milton Krims

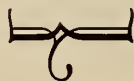
(Continued from Page 15)

appointments with it. But at least I had an active voice in its making and if sometimes my voice was drowned out, at other times it was attentively listened to. This is a step in the right direction. Very humbly, may I suggest that screen writers prepare them-

selves to carry this added responsibility?

I will close where I started—with reference to my conscience. It is not every writer who makes *Pravda* and a by-line article by Ilya Ehrenberg. Nor is it every picture that brings mass picketing and riots to otherwise peaceful American streets.

I'm rather pleased I wrote *The Iron Curtain*. Once and for all it has proved to me that the Communist who demands for himself all the rights of free speech is unwilling to grant them to anyone else, especially his opposition. Up where I come from, everybody has a chance to say his own piece the way he sees it. And if it makes for confusion—it also makes for free men.



Television

The Screen Publicists Guild will sponsor, beginning September 15th, a comprehensive television course for members of the Hollywood unions and guilds at the Hollywood Guilds and Unions Building, 2760 Cahuen-ga Freeway. Five weekly sessions, en-

titled TELEVISION — REVOLUTION IN HOLLYWOOD, will feature outstanding specialists in each phase of television at each session.

Members of the Screen Writers' Guild are invited by the Publicists

Guild to enroll in this course.

There are announcements describing the series available in the SWG office as well as registration forms. The charge for the entire series of five sessions will be \$5.00.



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(September 1, 1948)

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Republic — Sloan Nibley; alternate, Patrick Ford.

RKO — Daniel Mainwaring; alternate, Martin Rackin.

Fox — Richard Murphy; alternate, Wanda Tuchock.

Universal-International — Dane Lussier.

Warner Brothers — Henry Ephron; alternate, Harriet Frank.

V O T E !



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CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENTS**

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AT THE

**BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th**



BE PRESENT

OR BE SURE YOUR BALLOT IS IN THE OFFICE BEFORE
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Writer**

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The Screen Writer

STATEMENTS
OF THE
CANDIDATES FOR
THE SWG ELECTION
NOVEMBER 17, 1948

ERIC JOHNSTON:
Report from Europe



Comment

(By coincidence the two brief critical comments following were submitted to *The Screen Writer* unsolicited and on the same day. It is significant that in their own different words and terms of thought, the authors have given voice to much the same sense of dissatisfaction, of groping for a vitality which is all too rare in our films today but was once abundantly present. This, as both writers indicate, is not the problem only of those engaged in making motion pictures, but the problem of those, as well, for whom they are made.)

What's Happened, Baby?

By DWIGHT CUMMINS

I like pictures. I've liked them ever since I was a kid in a small country town, and drove seven miles of a Saturday night to the 'Opera House' — where they showed pictures first, and then cleared the bench seats away for dancing.

I liked them when I escaped from college to the Mack Sennet Studios and sat around while a bunch of gag men magically took a straight story and twisted it into hysteria and belly laughs.

I liked them through the Flapper Age, Depression, Gangsters and World War II.

They were fun and on the whole fairly honest.

I laughed at big name authors who came out from the East, did a picture or two, and then went back to New York mumbling incoherently. I passed it off with the phrase "Sour Grapes" and let it go at that.

And then a chill began to set in.

Something had happened. The thrill, baby, had gone.

No, I wasn't doing too bad. I was doing better than usual. Of course I was older, and comic books didn't have the same draw.

But when I started walking out on pictures, it was an event.

(Continued on Page 24)

The Screen Writer

Vol. 4, No. 4

OCTOBER, 1948

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The Little Brown Men

By

OLIVER H. P. GARRETT

THE title of this piece used to be an expression in the picture business. I first heard it from Grover Jones nearly twenty years ago when a little group of writers who liked to talk used to meet at The Writers Club for dinner once a week and tell stories of their experiences. The talk was mostly about the picture business, and that made Grover the head-talker, because he knew more about the movies than any of the rest of us. According to Grover, the little brown men were those mysterious characters on the screen, seen or unseen, whose actions enlivened or sustained the suspense. During the big chase sequence, when a big black sedan, its curtains drawn, pulled away from the curb and spun around a corner, tires squealing ominously, in pursuit of our boy, inside the sedan were the little brown men. At other times, they peeked mysteriously through the window of the secret love-nest of our girl, an unhappy lady who, though innocent, might find it difficult to explain what she was doing there in her underclothes; they made our boy's eight-shooter vanish at a critical moment; they hid our girl's handbag with the fatal note in it; they stopped the hall clock at the instant of the crime: midnight. And sometimes they performed odd and mysterious acts bearing no relation whatsoever to the story, just to keep the suspense rolling. They were very useful, busy boys, the little brown men.

It has been only recently, since spending a year and a half in Latin America, that I have realized that this handy bit of trade lingo might

be given another connotation, expressing the attitude of Hollywood movies toward what we laughingly call our Good Neighbors south of the border. Obviously, the picture business is not alone responsible for the resentment of Americans felt by nearly all Spanish speaking people in the Western Hemisphere. For more than a hundred years Central and South Americans have resented "Manifest Destiny," "Yankee Imperialism," and "Dollar Diplomacy." However, believe me, the movies have had their share in creating the deep, if seldom expressed, hatred felt toward us.

DURING the decisive period of the recent Costa Rican revolution, the American Military Attaché at a party in the capital, San Jose, was conversing amiably with one of the more extreme right wing sympathizers and supporters of the revolutionary Opposition. The revolution was being directed against a government supported by the Costa Rican Communist Party, whose leader was a man named Manuel Mora. Seemingly without relation to the rest of the conversation, the Costa Rican right-winger interpolated the comment that he would rather see twenty of the Americans in Costa Rica put up against a wall and shot than that Mora be killed. The American betrayed a certain undiplomatic surprise at this statement in view of the Costa Rican's political views and his often-expressed and bitter loathing of Mora, and particularly because of the new openly anti-communist policy of the U. S. State Department. The Costa Rican was neither to be cozened nor

cousined. Whatever else Mora was, he persisted, he was a Costa Rican. This, coming from a gent who, like all other rich Costa Ricans, had consistently refused to pay any income tax at all and regarded the mild and disregarded Costa Rican labor laws as little short of anarchy, may give you a small idea of the true inner feeling of many Latin Americans toward us. That they ape us, respect us—if it be respect you feel for someone big enough to beat your brains out—and often save their money so as to come and live among us, doesn't change matters; they don't like any part of us. And the American pictures are right in there helping things along to the worst of their ability.

IN most Latin American countries, the movies are a major source of entertainment and, even in Mexico and Argentina, where they make pictures themselves, most of the movies shown are from Hollywood. In Costa Rica, during the fiestas when open gambling is permitted (and at what brutal odds! at chuck-a-luck if they hit your number with all three dice they pay only three to one, and on a roulette table with twelve numbers besides 0 and 00, they pay five to one on a number) and when there is more dancing and home entertaining than usual, the social life in San José and the other cities seems reasonably gay and varied. But at all other times, the movies offer the only amusement in the evening, except for the traditional Sunday night *retreta*, when for an hour the girls walk one way around the main plaza and the men in the other direction. The big

moment of the week for Costa Ricans rich enough to afford a sixteen-cent ticket to the movies in first-run houses was the early show on Sunday night, which followed the *retreta*. Here friends who hadn't met all week greeted each other as if at a party. When the Government accused a well-to-do young Oppositionist of dynamiting the press room of *La Tribuna*, his alibi was that he was at The Razor's Edge at the Raventos.

It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of movies, and especially those made in Hollywood, in relation to the daily life and thinking of Latin Americans. For what is true of Costa Rica is equally true of the other and larger Spanish speaking countries. And when a picture like *Holiday in Mexico* comes along, whether it be dubbed or with Spanish titles accompanying the English dialogue, the only result is that the resentment already felt against El Colosso del Norte is fanned until it grows.

I have no knowledge what precautions are taken in Hollywood studios when they make pictures with Latin American backgrounds, having never worked on one myself. It seems probable that so-called technical advisers are employed on these pictures much as they have been on the pictures with European backgrounds with which I am familiar. In relation to the latter, in my experience, technical advisers have had little authority,

and more often than not have been wholly disregarded. They were not to blame when the product proved less than amiable to audiences abroad. A similar condition, I suspect, exists in regard to Hollywood pictures about Latin America.

The most frequent offense of such pictures probably seems to producers here to be not very serious. It is one that springs from the little brown men attitude, one which is perhaps held by most U. S. citizens; that all nationalities with a somewhat darker pigmentation than we are pleased to regard as customary among ourselves, are either menacing, mincing or comical, and in all cases venal.

But it remains for a picture like *Holiday in Mexico* to turn a slight sneer into a smear. This was a million-dollar opus (if it cost more, the studio, and not I, should apologize) in which a major comedy situation had to do with a young Mexican girl and the American Ambassador to Mexico. In the story the girl was an acquaintance of his daughter. She was depicted as having a girlish crush on our Ambassador, a widower, a devotion of which he was unaware. Innocently, he makes a remark which, in her ignorance of the Master Language, she interprets as a marriage proposal. Subsequently, her parents, very broadly cast for comedy, call upon him to discuss the question of a dowry. It is made clear, as only MGM can make it clear, that these dark-skinned, comical mon-

keys, although they have plenty of money, intend to promote the nuptials as cheaply as possible. The Ambassador's consternation at his position is only the lesser part of the comedy situation. It is clearly designed to be uproarious when he hits upon a scheme to avoid marrying the little brown girl without making his real objections undiplomatically apparent. He explains that the United States is not rich enough to support its ambassadors, who must live very expensively for the sake of prestige, and that the little brown ones will have to make up their minds to take over the expense of the entire Embassy. This sends the parents scuttering out of the place, to the amusement of all, no doubt, except of those sitting in theatre seats somewhere south of the Rio Grande.

LET'S not blame this sort of bad taste only on the producers. A very large part of it rests with the writers in the picture business. After all, studios don't shoot what some writer hasn't written. Not all of Mr. Breen's objections to making heavies of any resident of any country except Russia are ill-founded. If we in the movies had not dealt for many years with most of the other peoples of the world as if they were all little brown men, they might not be so sensitive now. Hollywood movie writers too often are like those Englishmen who used to say: "The niggers begin at Calais."

The Credit Union in Action

THE Screen Writers' Federal Credit Union is rolling. It has developed enough momentum to presage entire success, but we must have the participation of many more members of the Guild to assure success finally.

Up to October 7th, 125 members have subscribed \$11,332.75, this in individual investments ranging from \$5 to \$1000. The Union has made 29 loans totalling \$8,385.33, and, on the basis of its present capitalization, can now finance secured loans of \$1,100.

The loans previously made have in some instances been matters of convenience at low interest rates, in others have served to tide members over in times of real financial distress.

The success of this undertaking, one of the most constructive and practical programs ever developed in the Guild, is the obligation of every one of us. There are over six hundred members who have not subscribed. There is no reason why a majority of these shouldn't. The sooner we have wider participation, the greater the benefits will be and the nearer we shall come to putting the Union on a profitable basis.

CALL THE GUILD OFFICE FOR INFORMATION!

"I Remember No One"

By

ROBERT HART HALFF

JOE was fiddling with his tie. His fat thumb and forefinger moved deliberately up and down the silk. Up and down. I knew the gesture. It was accompaniment to the silence which always followed his explanation of why the script which only last month was "a sure thing to sell to Twentieth" was, four weeks later, "a dead duck." As I watched the agent, I wished he'd just hand me the five typewritten copies and let me go. Not Joe. He'd come up with some idea for another story. Usually the idea stank but somehow it seemed to make Joe feel better. It was his way of giving his clients "encouragement." I settled back in the chair. After all, if it made Joe any happier . . .

"Trouble with your stuff, Baby," he was saying, "is you been drawing from your imagination."

"That's bad?"

He nodded, running his hairy hand over his hairless head.

"Yeah," he suggested, "you oughta write a remember story."

"A 'remember' story?"

"Sure! What were the biggest hits recent? I'll tell you. 'I Remember Mama,' 'Life With Father,' 'My Sister Eileen.' Every one about somebody in somebody's family who's kinda non compass mentis. Maybe in your family there's somebody with quirks?" He peered hopefully into my face. "Get it?"

I got it. Suddenly it was as clear as a producer's billing on a four sheet. Most of the smashes recently had dealt with deviations from the normal among the author's folks. Yeah! For a fellow with a typewriter handy, this was one helluva time to be born an orphan. Besides, there wasn't any good reason why *my* relatives couldn't

be just as peculiar as the rest of them! I thanked Joe and hurried home.

Soon I began. "I was born in San Antonio, Texas." The typing ceased. Texas was always good for a laugh—but, well—San Antonio. Not bad if I was going to write a story about the Alamo but . . . it *did* seem a dull town in which to be born. I shifted in my chair. If only my Mother had given birth in, say, Sheboygan—or Tallahassee—or even Albuquerque. There were names to tickle the risibilities of any audience. I paused briefly to ponder just what part of the anatomy the risibilities were and came to no decision. Anyhow, I'd stress Texas. I'd recall how I was born on a deserted ranch during a big sand storm. A Norther was blowing and there wasn't a doctor for miles around. Father saddled Old Paint. . . .

NO, that wouldn't do. I remembered how my mother had told me all the details. I was born right in the City, in a big, clean sanitary hospital and, even though it might not have been as showy as the one Dr. Gillespie was head of, it was modern and fireproof. I tore up the paper and took an aspirin.

"I remember life with Father when my heart was young and gay." Quite good I decided. But somehow it lacked originality. Of course, if I set it to music. . . . Nevertheless, I was on the right track. I'd write about my father.

"Father was a good business man. He did not smoke or drink and he never cursed at all. He had a calm, easy-going disposition and never shouted at anyone, not even my mother. I doubt if he was baptized

but I recall his saying he was bar mitzvahed at an early age, not that Mother would have minded too much if he hadn't been."

I stopped typing. If only Pop had been "irascible" like Mr. Day. Instead, he was the sweetest, kindest man in the world. It made good living with but bad reading of. I decided to write of Mother.

I felt better. Mother had one most amusing habit. Whenever we went *out*, she left the lights *on* to make would-be burglars believe we were home. So when we were *home*, it looked as though we were *out*. And when we were *out*, it looked as though we were *home*. Good homesy folksy stuff all right! I could just see my family leaving with all the lights in the house on. Across the street I could have a couple of stick-up men. One would turn to the other and say, "The lights are on, they're out." Then, hurriedly, they'd go over and break into the house, robbing everything and. . . . No, our house was NEVER robbed and it wouldn't have mattered much if it had been. Father, careful provider that he was, always carried full insurance coverage. I began again.

"Mother came from a very good family. Since she was rich and Father was doing quite well, she seldom worried about her bank account. Too, if she was overdrawn she knew she could ask Grandma for money and the old lady would give her whatever amount she needed. She did not do her own cooking and cleaning since we had a maid and a chauffeur who were very capable. Besides, a man named 'Miller' came in once a week to do thorough cleaning.

(Continued on Page 20)

Report From Europe



THE American motion picture is today the unhappy victim of its mass popularity around the world.

Its popularity approaches fairy-tale proportions. Cans of American film travel around the world by ship and plane, by train and cart, by camel back and dog traineau. They are unloaded and handled by hot and sweating men who wear burnouses—and by chilly men in fleece-line jackets and in earlaps.

Let the lights dim down in theaters which literally box the compass, and it's more than three to one the evening's entertainment is a Hollywood production. Our pictures occupy a preponderance of the world's screen playing time.

A coin collector would be the envy of his hobby club if he had but one specimen each of the various kinds of small change shoved through the ticket windows by more than two hundred million persons every week.

He'd have francs, shillings, liras, pesos—almost anything but rubles, for pictures play regularly in every country except Russia and Yugoslavia.

This indisputable popularity of American pictures abroad is nothing new, of course.

What is new is the way that government critics and private critics have suddenly begun to look at American motion pictures.

Today, the governments of the world are propaganda-conscious as they never were before. The peoples of the world are propaganda-ridden as they never were before.

Governments are spending vast sums to influence and mold the minds and attitudes of people. Some of this money is spent wisely, some is wasted. Some propaganda is effective, some

backfires, but at any rate the old truism that the pen is mightier than the sword is being tried out on a global scale and spelled out before our eyes.

Our own government has its first peacetime official propaganda bureau in all its history, "The Voice of America." I'm all for that, and so's our industry.

It's inevitable in this universal draft of all communications mediums to official and ideological purposes that our motion pictures—the most potent medium of mass appeal—should be peered at through strong microscopes to see what effect they have on audiences.

We have critics at home and abroad who, johnnies-come-lately, are just discovering that the motion picture is a great medium of information and communication.

THE American motion picture is somewhat in the position of a candidate for office who suddenly finds himself surrounded by a clamoring horde of would-be strategists, policy-makers, campaign managers of one kind or another, but mostly would-be brain-trusters who are out of touch with the voters.

Our critics are telling us that we are distorting values in the stories that we tell, giving foreign audiences a falsified impression of American life; and worst of all, we're told, our pictures overdo the themes of love, sex and crime. We ought, we are told, have a greater sense of responsibility.

There's nothing new in this charge of "too much love, sex, and crime." It is simply coming in louder and from different sources, but it recalls the

story of the solemn committee which approached a famous ecclesiastic to solicit his aid in a campaign against motion pictures.

"Do you realize," asked the leader of the committee, "that 90 per cent of all pictures made are based on the themes of love, sex and crime?"

The Bishop, a sage and wordly-wise man, hesitated before replying, and then said this:

"Gentlemen, I am flattered that you should have recourse to me in this praiseworthy undertaking. But before I subscribe my support, I would like to ask you a question: What would you make pictures about if you did not make them on the subjects of love, sex and crime?"

The critical issue, he said, is not *that* these subjects are treated on the screen but *how* they are treated.

We agree with the Bishop—and so does the Motion Picture Production Code. The criterion for dealing with any subject on the screen is decency and good taste. Within that framework Hollywood must be free to deal with life as it is and literature as it is.

THAT'S what some of our critics no longer want us to do. They want "propoganda" pictures about America, showing only the good and none of the bad. And more often than not, they can't agree among themselves what's good and what is bad.

Each one has a different idea of how America should be painted on the screen as pure paradise.

In this group of self-appointed critics are a liberal sprinkling of "intellectual snobs" who follow the

by Eric Johnston

President, Motion Picture Association



"smart-set" vogue that no literate person could possibly like any motion picture.

I fall into their clutches every time I go abroad.

In this lorgnette and solo-cheater circle, I am forever being told how dreadful our pictures are. Even a few of our junior diplomats share this hoity-toity point of view, but it's mostly the line of the element which looks sneeringly down its collective nose at anything with mass appeal as *ipso facto* bad.

Of course most of them are critics in absentia. They rarely if ever see a motion picture. They're in a hole immediately when they're asked: "What pictures have you seen lately?"

The inevitable answer is they haven't seen any or maybe one or two within the year. They are, in short, kibitzers who enjoy riding a merry-go-round of criticism for free.

This group of heavy thinkers will never understand why motion pictures are the art of the masses, for they have little contact with the people and consequently don't know what people think.

They think that the opinion of their own little circle is the voice of the people, and they don't realize that the inbred thinking of their own group is merely their own voice.

The kind of criticism we do like to have and which carries weight with us comes from movie-goers who refer to a specific picture and register their likes and dislikes down to specific scenes.

ONE of the first things I learned when I came into the industry was this: there are bound to be honest

differences of opinion about individual pictures. It's presumptuous and hazardous to be cocksure about the merits or demerits of an individual picture.

I know this from rather embarrassing experience. Recently I saw a picture which I thought was poor entertainment and would not have a popular appeal. I was wrong. The critics raved about it, and it's breaking records at the box-offices everywhere.

Seeing a motion picture, like reading a book, is a personal experience. No two people are apt to see it quite alike.

Our critics fall into the common trap of thinking they can chart audience reaction in advance.

Here's a case in point:

Not long ago, some of our government and private critics were horrified because "The Grapes of Wrath," a picture based on the Steinbeck novel, was shown abroad. "Too seamy!" they cried. "That's a side of American life better untold outside our borders."

Yugoslavia pirated a print of the film and showed it under the title, "The Paradise That Is America," gleefully pointing to the plight of our migrant workers in the days of drought and depression as a typical, permanent American condition. The Communists thought they had a damning weapon against democracy in their hands.

Our critics and the Communists were both wrong. The thing that impressed the Yugoslav audiences was that the migrant workers drove away in their own jalopies when police chased them out of tent-and-shanty town.

And I challenge anyone to show a more sympathetic character than Ma

Joad in "The Grapes of Wrath." Her stout-hearted efforts to keep her family together must have had compelling appeal to the distraught and troubled families of Europe who, too, had lost their homes and their possessions.

NOW let's look at this business of the "responsibility" which we're told we have.

Our critics have one idea about it. We have another.

Hollywood is in business to make money, exactly like every publishing house, every newspaper, every radio station, every magazine.

If we tried to make pictures within the narrow limits of the "responsibility" set by our critics; if we deliberately made propaganda pictures, our industry would not only go bust, but would be doing the worst possible service for America.

Without being an apologist for the industry, I can say that Hollywood is acutely aware of its responsibility as the guardian of a great medium of mass communication. Its record in peace and in war will measure up to that of any other instrument of expression.

I confess frankly that we make some bad pictures. No one in the industry denies it. Certainly, I don't. I am presently disturbed at the excess of violence and brutality in some of the pictures, and steps are being taken against this trend. Not long ago the industry voluntarily agreed to curb films based on the lives of notorious gangsters.

Hollywood shares the common plight of all creative endeavors. The shelves are full of bad books, the magazines get stuck with bad stories; the theater doesn't come through with

a classic drama every week in the year.

THE good among motion pictures far exceeds the bad. I could wish the margin were narrower, but even as it is Hollywood has no need to blush about it.

Our aim is to send a balanced diet of films abroad, and we are making progress toward that goal. We are weeding out some of the worst.

All our best pictures are going overseas, but it takes many, many, pictures to reflect the whole story of America, just as it takes many, many books and stories to paint the American scene.

America is like a great mosaic. One must look at the pattern of a mosaic as a whole to appreciate and understand it. No one of its stones of many sizes, shapes and colors is complete in itself. It is so with one story, book or film about America.

The average foreign movie goer regards our pictures with respect because Hollywood has not tried to make it appear that American democracy is Utopia. Our pictures tell the best and the worst about us, and give foreign audiences an objective appraisal.

That's our idea of how our industry can best fulfill its responsibility. It has been an effective method.

It's elemental that people will distrust stories about America told in the puff language of advertisements for soap and toothpaste.

Our pictures avoid deliberate, tub-thumping propaganda but they exude the spirit of democracy. The cop on the corner in our pictures is there to protect the people who live on his beat—not to poke into their private lives and snoop into their doings. The people in the Communist-captured countries aren't dumb. They're quick to catch the idea.

INDEED, while the ballot boxes of Communist-caged eastern Europe are closed to protest votes, the people have found they can register disapproval of political dictatorship at the

box office of American motion pictures. They are doing it—in droves. It enrages the Communist governments and the party leaders, and the people know it and enjoy it.

Our motion pictures, in a very real sense, have become a pictorial Gallup poll on democracy.

Let Communists denounce an American film, and it's a clear tip-off to the people that it's well worth seeing. The bigger the barrage against the picture, the bigger the "vote" at the box office.

When I was in Prague last year, I saw long lines waiting to get into already jam-packed theaters showing American films. In contrast, Soviet films were unwinding to almost empty seats. This was true despite an agreement which allotted Russia more than half the screen time in Czech theaters.

Desperate Czech Communists tried passing out free tickets to Soviet pictures and sending out trucks to factory gates to ride the customers to the door, but even that didn't work. They found out it was a simple thing to sign an agreement, but impossible to sign up an audience.

A case of using the box office to ballot against dictatorship was built around the American picture "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves."

This age-old fable was written several centuries before Hollywood was born, and on the basis of the time element alone, reasonable people could hardly construe it as propaganda for Capitalism or propaganda for Democracy.

But Czech Communists exploded every invective in the book at the ancient fantasy. The villain of the story, of course, was a dictator and a conqueror whom his subjects overthrew.

Quick to catch the parallel, delighted at the mounting frenzy of the Communists, the Czech people kept the picture playing 21 weeks in Prague, and more than a third of the capital's population saw it.

AND fresh out of Poland comes the story of what Polish people think of America in terms of our pic-

tures—and how the heavy-handed "planned" propaganda of their Communist masters can backfire in their faces.

Quaintly enough, the incident happened on July 4, this year.

The day before, "Film Polski," the Polish government film monopoly, announced a special Sunday matinee at the Atlantic theater in Warsaw, with free tickets to Warsaw trade union members and employees of the post and telegraph services and the ministry of communication.

Showing at the Atlantic theater was "Random Harvest." The invited audience for the Sunday matinee assumed it was going to see "Random Harvest," and the seats were promptly filled.

The lights dimmed, and the audience settled down to wait for Ronald Colman and Greer Garson. Suddenly this title flashed on the screen: "Moscow's 800th Anniversary."

The crowd was dumbfounded for a few seconds. Then a violent storm of protest broke loose.

The people shouted. They stamped their feet. They drowned out the sound track. Someone in the balcony tore loose a chair and blocked off the projection.

The lights snapped on, and the theater manager tried to appeal for order, but with a loud chorus of boos, the crowd rushed for the lobby.

And there—with grim fingers on the triggers of their tommy guns—was a platoon of militia which ordered the people back to their seats. The atmosphere was loaded with T.N.T.

The crowd returned, but it was unsubdued. It turned its back on the screen, and the cries went up: "Down with thieves!" "Long Live America!"

For half an hour this demonstration continued, while a frantic management yelled by telephone to the authorities to give the crowd what it wanted before it wrecked the house.

The audience won, and finally "Random Harvest" unwound before it. As the people triumphantly left the theater, there wasn't a militia man in sight.

(Continued on Page 17)

Election Statements From SWG Candidates

The Screen Writer offered to all candidates for office in the forthcoming November 17 SWG election, space for a condensed statement of the principles and policies on which they base their candidacy. Following are the replies:

HUGO BUTLER

Candidate for SWG Presidency

Our present Minimum Basic Agreement with the producing companies expires in May. The job ahead of the Board we elect this year is to negotiate a new contract and a better one.

The need for a new contract was never more urgent.

Since the war there has been a sharp decline in writer earnings and although industry profits have fallen only slightly from wartime levels our members are being forced, for lack of bargaining power, to accept unfair terms and low salaries.

I believe that our new Minimum Basic Agreement can alleviate these conditions by including a higher weekly minimum, a higher flat deal minimum, payment for re-issues, a minimum guarantee of employment on all assignments regardless of salary bracket.

Because an arrogant censorship aggravates our economic distress, fills creative workers in this industry with the fear of the blacklist and stifles freedom of thought and expression, it must be opposed.

I believe we should have full discussion of the Thurman Arnold suit instituted by us against the producing companies and consistent with the purposes of this suit incorporate in our Minimum Basic Agreement a clause designed to eliminate discrimination in employment because of race, religion or political belief.

How can we best work towards this new contract?

We must elect a Board willing to

add the influence of our Guild to that of other guilds and unions which are working for repeal of the anti-union Taft-Hartley Act.

We must elect a Board willing to seek out those allies inside the industry and outside it who will support our just and reasonable contract demands. We must elect a Board, unlike the one of last year, *that is representative of the entire membership.*

With this kind of Board we will be able to maintain a strong and unified Guild during our contract negotiations.

We will get a new contract.

We will get a better contract.

GEORGE SEATON

Candidate for SWG Presidency

Once again we come to an election and once again our problem is the same—UNITY. Yet never before have we needed it so desperately. The year ahead of us will be a most eventful one. We will negotiate for a new contract with the producers; our jurisdictional position in the field of television will be further explored and determined; the franchising of agents will be effected; a working agreement with the Eastern Screen Writers will be consummated; we will continue our present actions to combat blacklisting and, in conjunction with The Motion Picture Industry Council, we will have to find solutions to unemployment. This is quite a program for any board to contemplate. To solve the various problems will require the greatest effort on the part of the board and the greatest understanding and confidence on the part

of the membership. Without unity there can be neither confidence nor understanding, and any effort will be worthless.

It is interesting to note that Guild statistics show that in the past few years on certain issues to come before the membership—issues that were concerned *solely with writer problems*—ninety per cent of the time we voted together, practically unanimously. The obbligation of dissension and acrimony evident at so many of our meetings always grew out of discussions of issues *not* concerned with writer problems. In the past, with employment high, with the box office doing cartwheels, with television only a word, with blacklisting unknown, and with a contract in our pocket which still had years to run, it was only natural to go afield in search of issues to keep the Guild membership active and interested. In so doing we lost sight of the SWG objectives as set down in our constitution—objectives to which *every* writer can subscribe and all want to achieve. In the coming year's program, which I have outlined above, every problem is truly a writer's problem. Each is an issue on which we can all agree and work for together. If we can confine our efforts to the work ahead (and God knows, it's enough work for three years and five boards) we will succeed. If we continue to bring forth resolutions which serve only to cause a division in our ranks and to test the forensic ability of our members, we will waste time when time is most valuable and once more, a year from now, all candidates will again be pleading for unity.

HAROLD BUCHMAN

Candidate for Vice-President

Depression, theatre divorcement, the unforeseen in television, etc., — when in our history have writers had greater need for free, alert and progressive organization? Personal differences in our ranks must be immediately reconciled; political prejudices subjugated; we won't get to first base with less than a tough, united Guild. To this end I would work if elected.

OLIVER GARRETT

Candidate for Vice-President

It is my belief that the year following the November election of The Screen Writers' Guild may well prove to be for the Guild the most difficult of its recent critical years. The producers, I believe, trying to take advantage of current anti-Communist hysteria and of reduced production and writer-employment, may attempt to jockey us into a strike position in relation to the negotiation of a new contract. The agents' organization, taking their cue from the producers, are not likely to be much more intelligent or far-seeing as to their interests and ours. We have not yet found the potential strength of our Guild, which one day may come to us from a mutually binding association with writers in other fields, including the other Guilds of the Authors' League, and we're not going to find that strength this year. One of the deep differences in our ranks is that between the group that believes that for added strength we must look to the movie industry unions and the one that believes we must look to a solid, binding agreement with other writer-organizations. Of this latter group I am one, although I certainly anticipate no development in that direction this year, and perhaps not for a long time to come.

As I see it, the policy of The Guild in the coming year should avoid the extremes toward the Right or the Left, toward defense or attack, toward accepting a brush-off from the producers or instigating any ill-advised strike. With the producers we are limited to the NLRB procedures. We may have a very tough time getting

them to do more than go through the motions of negotiation. With the agents we are in a much stronger position.

As to our recent internal dispute about proxies, I believe that their present use and probable abuse should be changed, but that there are better and fairer ways of doing it than that contained in the resolution defeated at the last general meeting.

To sum up I believe this to be a year in which the Guild will need carefully considered, level-headed leadership pledged neither to reckless attack nor craven retreat. For this I stand. As to how I shall stand on any specific problem not yet fully developed, such as television and many others, I could not possibly say; I can only make up my mind when I get to it.

DON HARTMAN

Candidate for Vice-President

What I want for the Guild is so simple it's old-fashioned. I would like to see the restoration of unity and dignity. I would like to see writers judge each issue by its merits and not with their prejudices. I would like to see a man express honest convictions without jeers and sneers from so-called "factions." I prefer not to believe that all Republicans are fascists or that all Progressives are Communists. I also prefer not to believe that all producers are devils or that all writers are angels. I insist on the right to be left of center or right of center or just plain center without being "owned" by any group, gang or bunch. My analyst says I am a weak character who wants to be loved by everybody. Vote for me and make a fool of her!

ARTHUR KOBER

Candidate for Vice-President

With almost all the studios being involved in television, with a new contract coming up for negotiation next year, now, more than ever before, the economic status of the screenwriter needs protection and implementing. Because I believe so wholeheartedly

in the Guild and what it represents, I promise to do all I can to see that our members are assured their proper rights. Unlike some members of the board who were elected last year after making ardent and lofty promises, I shall, if elected, attend board meetings regularly, as I have done, and shall continue to take an active and aggressive stand on all issues affecting the interests of screen writers.

MARGUERITE ROBERTS

Candidate for Vice-President

If elected, I pledge myself to fight for the strongest and toughest contract in the history of the picture industry, with a maximum of economic and artistic protection for every writer. I am against blacklists in any form, either on the part of the employers or in the Guild itself. I believe such blacklists exist in both places, and I intend to oppose them. I am against the present proxy system, which I consider only a variation of the "ja" vote. I am for a militant Guild, with every active member really active. In these times? *Especially* in these times! I am convinced that the Guild will emerge from the next year or so as a real power and a force for good, or it will be out of business. Personally, I want it to be more in business than ever before.

WELLS ROOT

Candidate for Vice-President

In this year of national elections platform pronouncements seem to me more than usually silly. It is my opinion that Guild officers and Board members should deal with problems presented as sensibly as possible without reference to preconceived platforms or prior commitments. I believe the Guild has only one thing to fear — internal combustion. For the information of those voting, I opposed in earlier years the Screen Playwrights in their attempts to destroy this Guild. More recently I have generally opposed the radical group and their program which I have often regarded as less forthright, and more deeply disastrous.

LOUELLA MAC FARLANE

Candidate for Secretary

We want the best contract we can get in 1949, not the best that is handed to us. This means working committees, full attendance at frequent meetings, functioning lot organizations and the integration of non-working screen writers into full participation in Guild affairs. To clear the clogged channels of communication between the Board and the rank and file is the prime responsibility of the officers and Board. Only an active and fully informed membership can arrive at a realistic program. Only a courageous Board informed of and responsive to the will of the members can achieve that program.

(Paul Gangelin has withdrawn as a nominee for the office of Secretary.)

VALENTINE DAVIES

Candidate for Treasurer

As the annual Guild election approaches, there are many people who would like to think that the Guild has been divided and weakened by factionalism. The recorded vote of the membership over the past few years belies this wishful thinking completely. In every instance where the interests of the screen writer was clearly and exclusively at stake, the vote of the membership was practically unanimous.

In a year in which we must negotiate a new contract it seems to me there is only one thing I can say: That I believe wholeheartedly in the united strength of the Guild and will do everything within my power to foster it and use it for the purpose for which the Guild was organized.

WALTER DONIGER

Candidate for Treasurer

I wish to state my basic thinking about the Screen Writers' Guild as the first step in running for office.

The job of the SWG is to better the working conditions and economic position of its every member.

Anything that affects these, including such matters as the agent negoti-

ations, the Taft-Hartley Bill, reissues, the black list, and television, is the proper business of the Guild.

Disunity and unwillingness to work within the framework of the Guild is a direct act against the well-being of every screen writer. But free discussion, no matter what disagreement it involves, must be encouraged as the sign of a living and vital organization.

For out of disagreement and democratic free debate with members present at meetings comes understanding of our own best interests.

Out of understanding comes unity.

And from that unity will come the ability to achieve the dignity we want, the security we want, and—first of all—the contract we want.

EDMUND BELOIN

Candidate for Executive Board

If elected, I propose to steer that difficult and thankless course between left of center and right of left; to maintain an independent attitude on all issues; and to do everything in my limited power to further the prestige and dignity of our craft.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT

Candidate for Executive Board

Like everyone else I want a strong Guild, firm and fair negotiations with producers and agents, and greater professional recognition for screen writers.

Unlike everyone else I am for a revision of our proxy system that will include the rights of those who can attend meetings as well as those who cannot; and that will limit the number of proxies any one member can vote.

I am also for pursuing the aim of an all-industry council, to include producers and agents of course, which will work toward an alleviation of our periodic crises of unemployment.

HUGO BUTLER (See Mr. Butler's statement as candidate for president)

Candidate for Executive Board

HAROLD BUCHMAN (See Mr. Buchman's statement as candidate for vice-president)

Candidate for Executive Board

FRANK DAVIS (No statement)

Candidate for Executive Board

HOWARD DIMSDALE

Candidate for Executive Board

1. Seek a formula for an industry-wide plan to provide a measure of economic security for members of all guilds and unions by means of royalties and/or severance pay and/or a retirement fund.
2. Correct the evils in the Guild's proxy system.
3. The Guild to function as an agent in seeking employment for its members in the 16 mm. field.

EDWARD ELISCU

Candidate for Executive Board

After fifteen years in SWG, eighteen years in ASCAP, and twenty in the Dramatists' Guild, I would work for the following:

- 1) Encouraging the royalty system.
- 2) Abolition of prolonged speculative work on producers' ideas. One interview to hire or not to hire—to buy or not to buy.
- 3) Abolition of proxy voting, except in cases of illness, absence from the city, or screen writing business.
- 4) Higher minimum and flat deals.
- 5) Closer cooperation with other guilds and unions, and a permanent council of representatives to keep abreast of the trends in the industry.
- 6) Arrangements for television rights to be based on agreement with Authors' League and other talent guilds and unions in the industry.
- 7) Continue strong stand against blacklisting and for the freedom of the screen.

GUY ENDORE

Candidate for Executive Board

In this contract-renewal year the big problem in the Guild would seem

to be that of unity. But that is not the case. Is there any writer who does not, for example, want to reserve his television rights? Can there possibly be more than a handful of members who condone that violation of our American Constitution: blacklisting? Are we not all in general agreed upon the necessity of a floor under wages and under flat deals? And what about the injustice of re-issues and re-makes? Does not that call for adjustment? Obviously our distant goal must be to obtain for the screen writer something approximating the rights and the position enjoyed by the dramatist on Broadway, while our immediate aim should be to secure as fast as possible a new contract embodying the greatest gains consistent with the present circumstances. A board working for true guild progress should have no real problem about unity.

RICHARD ENGLISH

Candidate for Executive Board

In the coming year we face the problems of a new contract with the producers; the licensing of agents, and implementing a program that will be a step forward for television writers and our guild. If elected it is my intent to serve our guild in those matters and any others that are of direct importance to all guild members.

ERWIN S. GELSEY

Candidate for Executive Board

Do we want a Guild?

This may well be the year of decision.

I, for one, want to see a Guild functioning for the greatest good for the greatest number.

The outgoing board, insofar as it represented my views, did a job probably under the most trying circumstances in the history of the Guild. . . . It is to be regretted that only six of them consented to run again. . . . As a member of the Board, I would endeavor to pursue the policies advocated by these men and women of good will.

Specifically, I would urge a change in the matter of the disputed proxies. Efforts having failed, only last month, to correct this abuse, I would favor some form of direct mail ballot as being preferable to the control at present exercised by a handful of proxy holders.

MARGARET GRUEN

Candidate for Executive Board

This is the most difficult year for the Guild since we won our contract and the membership as much as its Board must participate fully in the decisions to come. I am a middle bracket writer, a fairly representative Guild member, and I have been closely associated with the film business for fifteen years. For these reasons I was very glad to accept the nomination. If I am elected I shall make every effort to involve the membership as fully as possible in the work undertaken by the Board.

EDMUND HARTMANN

Candidate for Executive Board

A plague on both your houses if you continue to use the Guild as a miniature international proving ground. I want more money, more publicity, and more dignity for screen writers, individually and as a profession. I like the present Board and hope the new one will do as well.

EDWARD HUEBSCH

Candidate for Executive Board

I believe the most important thing the Guild can do is to negotiate a better contract for the writers.

This isn't going to be easy. I don't think we can get another dime by being 'nice,' by falling for the NLRB-Taft-Hartley affidavits, or by raising a lot of red-scaries in the Guild.

There's only one practical way to get anything these days: To fight for it. Even then we might not get what we deserve, but if we don't fight, we'll wind up with even less than we have.

KARL KAMB

Candidate for Executive Board

In matters pertaining to business, the Guild members have always seen pretty much eye-to-eye. I say stick to business, avoid politics, and preserve Guild unity. We'll need it.

ARTHUR KOBER (See Mr. Kober's statement as candidate for vice-president)

Candidate for Executive Board

MILTON KRIMS

Candidate for Executive Board

What I said last year still goes!

ROBERT LEES

Candidate for Executive Board

I entered the industry in 1934 at a time when the Guild wasn't recognized and qualified writers were earning as little as \$35 a week. Today with conditions of speed-up, salary cuts, re-issues and unemployment, a new contract can only be won by full participation of the membership in negotiations and a board that will fight to carry out their wishes. Full participation of the membership means meetings that are not hobbled by proxy voting, and a fighting board means one that will not allow itself to be tied up in the "red" tape of the Taft-Hartley Act.

GLADYS LEHMAN

Candidate for Executive Board

If elected I shall give conscientious attention to all matters affecting the Guild. My vote on any question will be independent and based only on what I consider the welfare of the Guild.

STEPHEN LONGSTREET

I am for writers; screenwriters. I am for guilds; the Screen Writers' Guild. But I am for a guild without special groups, pleas or pressures. To me the Guild was created as a mutual

weapon against those forces that try and keep the writer from taking his rightful place as a full partner in making motion pictures. Private battles, personal or political events are not, to me, part of the Guild's job.

Here is what I am for. Better and bigger writers' credits. Every writer's name as big as the director's or the producer's. A fuller control over what the writer does; a closer working world with the director and the actors. I am for leasing of story material, and full control of radio and television rights. I am against permitting the panic and blacklisting talk that is sweeping the industry to spread.

I want more writers working, and I want a bigger share of the income of the industry given to writers.

I do not know all the answers. I promise to work on them.

LOUELLA MACFARLANE (See Miss MacFarlane's statement as candidate for secretary)

Candidate for Executive Board

WINSTON MILLER

Candidate for Executive Board

The principles I believe in for Guild officership can be stated very simply. Personal political beliefs should have no place in the conduct of Screen Writers' Guild affairs. The Screen Writers' Guild can be effective only if it is a strong guild; it can be strong only if it is unified; and experience has proved that unity can be achieved only when the Guild concentrates its attention and efforts solely on problems which are pertinent to the profession of screen writing.

We have had a constructive year under a board dedicated to this policy. I should like to see that policy continued.

RICHARD MURPHY

Candidate for Executive Board

I have a feeling that the members of the present Board of the Screen Writers' Guild have set an example for liberal, honest and impartial handling of matters which apply strictly

to screen writers. As a candidate for the Board I could only hope to follow the precedent set by them.

SLOAN NIBLEY

Candidate for Executive Board

Next year looms as the most important to screen writers and the SWG since the year the Guild was organized.

Beyond the vital matter of renegotiating our contract with the producers we face a year bringing Hollywood in general and writers in particular such problems as diminishing foreign returns, unemployment, re-issues and television; not to mention the Thomas Committee.

To meet these problems our new Board will need both purpose and unity. If chosen as a Board member I will consider it my duty to work for both.

STANLEY ROBERTS

Candidate for Executive Board

The candidates running for office have been asked to write a statement assuring the membership what they will do if elected. I feel that the situation should be reversed—the membership should make certain assurances to the candidates:

1. The membership elect a truly representative Board consisting of all shades of opinion in the Guild.
2. The membership take immediate steps to cure the proxy evil. Our new Minimum Basic Agreement and the rights of screen writers in television can be won only by a solid and well informed membership—not by a deck of cards.
3. The membership cease its constant internecine and concentrate on its rightful objectives.

Running for the Guild Board does not have to be a thankless headache, a 52-week migraine. A strong membership can make it otherwise.

LOUISE ROUSSEAU

Candidate for Executive Board

My statement of last year still

stands—"Fifty per cent of the output of this industry comes from writers in the low bracket group. We have yet to attain a ten percent representation on the Board of this Guild."

With unemployment and the speed-up an actuality, and the contract negotiations ahead of us, I feel it is more important than ever that we be represented.

We cannot get the best possible contract unless we fight for it. Nor can we get the best possible contract if we allow ourselves to be sidetracked into the political issue of the Taft-Hartley Act.

I will fight for the best contract obtainable.

LEONARD SPIGELGASS

Candidate for Executive Board

We face the most critical year in Guild history. Firmness in dealing with television, agents, the Eastern Screen Writers, the Thurman Arnold matter, and the precarious condition of the industry as a whole is the well-spring of success or failure in producer negotiation. The Guild must deal with Guild problems and nothing else; no amount of fancy phenagling and special pleading by minority groups should disengage the next board from that course. I promise it will not disengage me.

DWIGHT TAYLOR

Candidate for Executive Board

I believe a secure economic foundation for the future of the Screen Writers' Guild depends almost entirely on the proper handling of film on television *now*. I also believe that the screen writer's technique and ability will be needed more than ever in the manufacture of films for the television screen. As far as the screen writer is concerned television is simply another *form of projection* of his work, and it is up to all of us to see that some form of royalty payment is established so that we do not lay up further insurmountable back-logs to confound us in the future. If elected

I will devote all my efforts to the achieving of this goal.

WANDA TUCHOCK

Candidate for Executive Board

There are a number of issues confronting writers at this time, such as contracts with the producers and agents, television, reissues, etc., etc.—all of which are of vital importance. Should I be elected to the Board, I'd bend every effort toward an immediate solution of these problems.

However, these are the trees which should not obscure our view of the forest. It seems to me that the industry

is moving toward an inevitable metamorphosis in the next three to five years; and that writers will play an important — perhaps the most important — part in determining whether this change shall be a renaissance or a further degeneration of present conditions. Things are moving so fast it's impossible to state or even guess at many of the problems we may be confronted with in the next year. Therefore, the best Board would seem to be the one that is alert, calm and confident.

I have never felt that politics have a place in the Guild any more than religious issues. I believe this has been proved to be the conviction of the

majority of the Guild—of which I consider myself a representative member.

M. COATES WEBSTER

Candidate for Executive Board

In any organization of writers there are bound to be many different philosophies. I believe that each and every one should be allowed expression, but in the final analysis it is my contention that the voice of the majority, not the minority, should govern the policies and actions of our Guild. I am not and never have been of any other opinion.

Group Insurance

The group insurance plan has now been in force for a little over four months. During this period members of the SWG have filed fifteen claims for accidents and illness, and indemnities have been paid in the amount of \$2,952.64. There are six claims pending and as yet unfiled, and eight claimants are still incapacitated and continuing to receive compensation beyond the total so far paid out.

The attention of the membership is called to the fact that the State Disability Insurance, in force now for something over six months, is payable to them in addition to the group insurance. This State Disability Insurance is not invalidated by whatever other insurance you may have. To illustrate, if you are totally incapacitated and insured under the Guild's group insurance plan you will get \$200 per month from this source plus \$100 monthly from the State Insurance provision.

We are now prepared to put into final effect the extension of the group insurance plan to cover dependent wives and children. This will be limited to those members already insured under the existing plan, and will require participation of seventy-five per cent of those now insured. One-third of these members have already indicated their wish to apply for the extension of the policy. The premium for this coverage of dependents will be \$14 semi-annually. At an early date application forms for the extension will be distributed to those members who are eligible. These forms should be returned immediately when they are received.

Since the preceding Committee report was written, the following letter which contains full information has been received from the insurance company:

"I wish to give you a few of the points that should be included in the letter which will be sent to present policy holders who have dependents. First, that the coverage will become effective December 3rd, 1948, providing 75 percent of the eligible members apply. Second, that they should not send in any money, as they will be billed on their December statements. The daily hospital rate is \$7.00 a day for 70 days plus \$25.00 for miscellaneous hospital expense. Maternity is covered after the policy has been in force nine months; for an amount equal to 10 times the daily hospital rate or \$70.00. This does not mean that we pay this \$70.00 in addition to the hospital, but means that in case of a maternity claim we make a lump payment of \$70.00.

"The rate for this coverage is \$14.00 semi-annually in addition to the present premium. This is a composite rate, and would cover the wife and as many children as the member may have. I do not believe it wise to use the term 'Dependents,' as it might lead some to believe that any near relative would be covered. Coverage only applies to the wife and children. It would help considerably if the ones who do not have dependents would let us know so we can take them off the qualification list."

PAUL GANGELIN



SCREEN WRITERS' GUILD, INC.

1655 NO. CHEROKEE AVE., HOLLYWOOD 28, CALIFORNIA
AFFILIATED WITH AUTHORS' LEAGUE OF AMERICA, INC.

OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE BOARD, THE SCREEN WRITERS' GUILD: PRESIDENT: SHERIDAN GIBNEY; 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT, GEORGE SEATON; 2ND VICE-PRESIDENT, F. HUGH HERBERT; 3RD VICE-PRESIDENT, DWIGHT TAYLOR; SECRETARY, ARTHUR SHEEKMAN; TREASURER, HARRY TUGEND. EXECUTIVE BOARD: ROBERT ARDREY, ART ARTHUR, CLAUDE BINYON, CHARLES BRACKETT, FRANK CAVETT, OLIVE COOPER, VALENTINE DAVIES, RICHARD ENGLISH, EVERETT FREEMAN, PAUL GANGELIN, ALBERT HACKETT, ARTHUR KOBER, MILTON KRIMS, ERNEST PASCAL, LEONARD SPIGELGASS. COUNSEL, MORRIS E. COHN. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ALICE PENNEMAN.

E D I T O R I A L

WITH this issue of *The Screen Writer*, the Executive Board of 1947-48 goes out of office, and the 1948-49 Board comes in. It is well to recall that the retiring Board was elected primarily on the platform of restricting Guild activities to Guild affairs, pledged to do all in its power to drive politics out of the Guild. But for all its efforts political factionalism remained to plague and obstruct the progress of the Guild throughout the entire year.

The conduct of minority groups at the General Meetings held throughout the year has disgusted many members who come to meetings to listen to impartial discussion of issues so as to be guided as to which way to vote. They do not come to meetings, which nobody really likes, to witness a display of parliamentary prowess, or listen to the biased Left belaboring the equally biased Right, or vice versa.

Yet, examining the issues presented and voted upon by the membership, it is interesting to note that every measure that had to do with the economic betterment of writers was decided by a practically unanimous vote, while those issues that had political implications were invariably split clean down the middle.

Nevertheless writers know what they want. They know what they want as regards their relationship with agents. They know what they want as regards their relationship with producers. They want a proper minimum wage, no options on their services, they want to be paid for what they write, they want to be adequately paid when they work as employees, and they want to be free to write what they wish and for whom they wish when they are not employees. They know, not so specifically perhaps, what they want as regards Television.

They want to cooperate in the development of Television, and in the early days when income will be low, they are willing to work for relatively low compensation, but they want to be assured that when Television becomes the thing it promises to be, they will be adequately paid, and furthermore, and more importantly, they want to be assured that the work they do for Television will not be taken advantage of and used to create competition among themselves and to undermine the standard of compensation which it has taken the screen writer so many years to build up.

How can screen writers achieve any of the things they so desperately need if the Guild, presumably the spokesman and bargaining agent of all screen writers is harrowed, hacked at, and divided by the two dissident fringe groups?

That is the question that should concern every writer at this particular time. It is a pity that it concerns some of us not at all.

What the Guild has achieved this year has been achieved by the Board in spite of disunity. And yet the job has been a gratifying one:

1. It met squarely the issue of black-listing. It employed Thurman Arnold to fight the unfair and undemocratic stand taken by the Johnston Office, which threatened the livelihood of every screen writer. It employed the best legal talent possible and raised two-thirds of the money necessary to defray this expense.

2. It achieved the Credit Union.

3. It achieved Group Insurance.

4. It reduced the cost of *The Screen Writer* from an exorbitant deficit of two thousand dollars a month to the deficit of the present issue, which is approximately one hundred and fifty dollars.

5. It explored thoroughly the important problems that are facing the screen writer today, such as Television, the Leasing and Licensing of material, and the possibility of royalty contracts — all having to do with important financial consideration — and prepared the Guild to meet them in the years to come.

6. It renegotiated Schedule A with the producers and paved the way for the renegotiation of the Writer-Producer Contract which expires next year, and is now in a position so far as specific recommendations are concerned to enter into negotiations with producers.

But do the results of this or any other Board warrant the time, the energy, the effort and the harassment that go with the willingness of a member to serve on the SWG Board? Sometimes in that dreary Cherokee Avenue conference room on Monday nights it doesn't seem so. And one speculates on how to change it.

The Guild is now sixteen years old. Sixteen years is a long time measured in modern progress. Sixteen years is long enough to grow up. In modern business, newer methods and better methods are constantly sought.

Is the SWG an old-fashioned, creaky piece of machinery, outmoded and too unwieldy to deal with the problems of screen writers today? Should it be

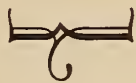
streamlined and brought up to date, as factories and airports and everything else in America is being streamlined?

Let us be modern enough at least to conceive that a revision of the form of the Guild might be a more effective organ. Let us face the fact of our particular Guild and ask ourselves specific questions.

Does it make sense for the officers and Board of the Guild to be elected for only a year? The problems of administration of the Guild are highly complex. Under our present system it is conceivable that a new Board may consist of members with no continuity of experience. This is manifestly absurd and something that has to be changed. Perhaps we should elect a Board for two or three years; perhaps only part of the Board should stand for re-election each year.

The same thing holds for committee chairmanships. Television and the Economic Program Committee require, for instance, knowledge that takes prolonged study. No new man, heading up these committees, can hope to have quickly the knowledge and judgment of the incumbent. Further, should there not be a complete revision of requirements for meetings? The quorum must be changed. The number of signatures necessary to have a special meeting must be changed. Special rules for meetings must be instituted. We cannot waste our time indefinitely moving business from one place to another on the agenda, spending an evening on a parliamentary wrangle, instead of Guild business. Are Roberts Rules of Order and Procedure satisfactory for us, or should we not make our own house rules? Should not chairmen of all committees be present at all Board meetings—or perhaps, going even further, should not committee chairmen and the Executive Board constitute a council of the Guild? How can we broaden out responsibility? How can the entire membership become aware of all the problems all the time? Is *The Screen Writer* a waste of money? Would not a house organ be of more value to us in this year of decision?

Let us consider overhauling the organization of the Guild in order that we may better serve our purpose in the coming year. Victory, of course, cannot be achieved through administrative machinery alone; it can, however, be considerably aided. The retiring Board asks your earnest consideration of these reforms, with the knowledge that no writer, to whom the Guild is a vital force in his professional life, will ignore any means to make that Guild more effective and more certain of victory.



Is Your Name on This List?

Charles Avedon
Theodore Benedek
Alvah Bessie
Michael Blankfort
George Beck
Edwin H. Blum
Ed Bock
Allen Boretz
Malcolm Stuart Boylan
Lou Breslow
Jameson Brewer
John Bright
Oscar Brodney
Peter R. Brooke
Harold Buchman
Sidney Buchman
Adele Buffington
David Chandler
Anne Morrison Chapin
Lester Cole
Morgan B. Cox
Harry Crane
Nathaniel Curtis
Luther B. Davis
Isabel Dawn
Albert DeMond
Howard Dimsdale
Jay Dratler
Edward Eliscu
Irving Elman
Mildred Elman
Martin Field
Sidney Fields
Frederic M. Frank
Irwin R. Franklyn
Paul Gangelin
Erwin Gelsey
Maurice Geraghty
Michael Geraghty
Patrick Geraghty
Sheridan Gibney
S. L. Gomberg
Howard J. Green

Albert and Frances Hackett
George Halasz
Victor Hammond
Edmund Hartmann
Walter Henry "Hy" Heath
F. Hugh Herbert
Milton Holmes
Tamara Hovey
Christopher Isherwood
Frederick Jackson
Alvin M. Josephy, Jr.
Karl W. and Teresa Kamb
Harvey Karman
Charles Kaufman
Louis S. Kaye
Edmond E. Kelso
Tom Kilpatrick
Harry Kleiner
Arthur Kober
Katherine Lanier
Jesse L. Lasky, Jr.
S. K. Lauren
Beirne Lay, Jr.
Jan J. Leman
Jacques LeMarechal
John Lord
Louella MacFarlane
Albert Maltz
Lawrence B. Marcus
Herbert F. Margolis
Al Martin
Don Martin
Buddy Mason
Winston Miller
Leonide Moguy
Elick Moll
John Monks, Jr.
McElbert Moore
Jane Murfin
Richard and Katherine M. Murphy
Jack Natteford
Virginia Van Upp and Ralph W. Nelson

Peter O'Crotty
Rae and David Olstein
Charles O'Neal
George Oppenheimer
Norman K. Panama
Starr Paret
Frank Partos
Ernest Pascal
Alice Penneman
Nat Perrin
Tom Reed
Allen Rivkin
Jack Rose
Robert Rossen
Ruth M. Roth
Wells Root
Louise Rousseau
Stanley C. Rubin
Paul de Sainte Colombe
George W. Sayre
George Seaton
Maxwell Shane
Irwin Shaw
Charles Shows
Irving Shulman
Donald K. Stanford
Arthur Strawn
Jo Swerling
Harold Tarshis
Ivan L. Tors
Guy Trosper
Wanda Tuchock
Harry Tugend
Eugene Vale
Luci Ward
Brenda Weisberg
George Wells
Edwin V. Westrate
Howard Irving Young

(If not, it should be. This is the list of those who have subscribed to the Credit Union. See page 2).



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Report From Europe

(Continued from Page 6)

OTHER governments don't call out the troops, but they do build battlements of other kinds to balk the flow of our pictures. They fire away at us with special taxes, quotas, trade barriers and other restrictive devices.

Many of these restrictions spring from dollar shortages, some from ambition to build up home industries.

These are understandable reasons. We fully recognize the dollar stringencies facing governments today, and no one can object to legitimate efforts to help domestic industries.

But we do very seriously object when funds realized from the showing of our pictures are used to underwrite our competitors to put us out of business, especially when this is done behind the excuse of a dollar shortage.

Look what's happened to us in Great Britain.

Britain last year slapped a 75 per cent tax on the earnings of imported motion pictures. That tax forced us out of the British market. It made it impossible for us to do business in Great Britain.

It did more than that. It demoralized the British motion picture business from top to bottom. It threatened mass closings of British theatres. It sent British production into a skid and brought British producers close to bankruptcy.

When the full force of the tax was felt, it was finally admitted on all sides that it was a great mistake.

And then, after months of needless impasse, our industry negotiated a film agreement with the British government. This accord eliminated the 75 per cent tax and stipulated that American companies could remit annually only \$17 million as against remittances of \$50 million last year.

Under the agreement, the British Government promised to assist our companies in utilizing their unremittable earnings. These funds could be used in ways which would not constitute a dollar drain on the British Treasury and which would not create unfair competition for British industry.

ON our part we were always ready to help Britain save dollars, and during the long impasse we made repeated offers to reach an agreement accomplishing this purpose.

The accord was negotiated in March and became effective in June. We thought the agreement had removed obstacles which were aggravating Anglo-American film relations and had opened a new and brighter period of harmony.

But the effective date of the agreement had barely been reached when Britain, without warning, cracked down with another blow.

Britain adopted a quota—two times higher than an existing one—requiring British theaters to devote 45 per cent of their first-feature playing time to British pictures.

This doubled screen quota, sponsored by British producers, is a legislative device denying the British people freedom of choice in selecting motion picture entertainment.

Under this quota, British moviegoers, almost half the time, will have to see British films, whether they are good or bad, or see none at all. The only freedom of choice they have is to stay away from the theaters.

In trying to legislate the British public into theaters to see British pictures, I think the British producers will find that they are, instead, legislating the people out of the theaters and legislating themselves into a depression which will drag British exhibitors down with them.

The British quota is a throwback to the old system of restrictions and trade barriers which so long was responsible for international economic confusion and chaos.

WE'VE had a lot of suggestions and advice from critics outside the industry. I'd like to return the compliment by giving them suggestions and advice.

My suggestion is this:

If our critics want a new and

worthy issue for their pens, they might help us resist the steady throttling of the free flow of information around the world. The motion picture is being throttled now. Who is next?

My advice is this:

Don't be so cocksure that you know all the answers. Public taste is an elusive and uncertain thing, and cannot be dictated to. Nor can it be deceived. It's the collective taste of all the people which determines whether a picture is good or bad.

Hollywood learned that long ago and learns anew every time it makes a film. That's the way it should be in America.

Correspondence

Executive Board,
Screen Writers' Guild.

How time flies!

Here we are again: Santa Claus Lane will soon be with us, the air will be tangy with a mixture of indestructible holly, rum cake and smog, and Western Union will be delivering once more the eagerly awaited telegrams of holiday greetings from our agents. And as we approach this festive season, we also near the date which marks the first Anniversary of the Blacklist.

As one of those honored by it, I feel entitled personally to mark the occasion. I think it doubtful we shall witness any spectacular public celebration by its creators memorializing the arrival of their little bundle of joy into our community. Yet we would be remiss indeed were we to allow the birthday of so accomplished a child to slip by without reviewing its precocious attainments.

To appreciate fully the extraordinary feats of one so young, we must bear in mind those responsible for its birth. Rumors that it is a bastard are a vicious canard; the birth certificate has been made public for all to see, and proves it to have been sired by Hollywood's "friendly witnesses," dammed by Thomas' un-American Committee, and mid-wifed by Eric Johnston's office of strategic services.

It is held by some folks, *tolerant* folks, that too many people are hypercritical of the parents just because they permit one so young to play with matches. True, they admit, the youngster thus far has wet the rug, and pulled down a curtain or two, and generally made a shambles of the living room, but since he hasn't burned down the house, why sound the fire alarm?

The sober truth is that we all live in that house, and a fire has been started in one of the rooms. And the alarm has been rung, but the volunteer brigade has yet to arrive on the scene and deal effectively with the blaze. Too many still cling to the hope that the fire is not in their room, and there is little danger of it spreading.

After all, it is argued, a whole year has passed, and the blacklist has destroyed the ability of only ten men to earn a livelihood for themselves and their families. (Officially it's only ten; the unofficial count is still to be announced.)

But at the same time, what amounts to a stranglehold (temporary) on the product of our industry has also been achieved. I don't think anyone seriously will defend the industry against the charge that its 1948 product is the least distinguished in film history. Certainly it is not the contention of this writer that this barren year has been caused by the failure of ten men to have their work filmed, but with equal certainty it is said that in the main, it is the result of the sickening spreading plague of the blacklist. Its companion is, of course, the rigid censorship imposed by Thomas, and watched over by his West Coast office, the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideal. And this straightjacket is being worn by the Producers Association, if not with pride, then at least with the self-conscious, gay defiance of a staid matron wearing an expensive, but highly unbecoming Easter bonnet—she bought it, and by God, she's going to wear it!

Finally, and what is perhaps most important, this sickly, puny brat has actually been successful in so intimidating the grown men and women of this industry that they have relinquished (temporarily) their most precious heritage—the right to speak freely what is on their minds, and what is in their hearts.

Some will contradict this statement sharply, and point out that there are famous actors, renowned directors, and highly paid writers who are speaking out boldly, passionately and contributing publicly large sums of money to such causes as they believe worthy. They will point with pride to the fact that Louis B. Mayer's directive of some time back, forbidding anyone to associate his name and voice with any political matters, has been most irreverently defied. All over town, right out in the open for everyone to see, blaze the names of those who courageously sponsor such groups as Hollywood Republicans for Dewey, Hollywood Democrats for Truman, and, until recently, there actually existed a group of rebels so bold as to proclaim themselves the Hollywood Republicans for Stassen!

But as of this writing, where are the Independent voters, and their voices? Where are the Wallace supporters? We know they are here, scores of prominent citizens, but only a few of the hardest have dared defy the criminal threat of the Blacklist. The majority have been gagged, forced to relinquish their inalienable right to make known their views without fear of economic reprisal. This too, I know can only be temporary.

There are clear signs that the euphemism, "film colony," until now merely a glamorous, geographic term, is fast taking on a less colorful meaning. As in all well-regulated colonial possessions, the absentee-owner, through his local overseer, has but to crack his whip, and his subjects obey. In Belgium's Congo and Britain's Guiana, failure to do so often results in a broken back; in Wall Street's Hollywood in a broken contract.

Agreed! agreed, it will be said wearily; agreed that our rights as citizens have been somewhat curtailed. But what, specifically, has that to do with our problems as writers. The answer, I believe, is "Everything."

Few will deny that Freedom of the Screen is an absolute must for all writers, regardless of his or her beliefs. It is not only an abstract political or aesthetic need, but an immediate economic one. Here is but one illustration:

As the subject matter of films becomes more and more limited, it follows inevi-

tably that the number of writers incapable of dealing successfully with the decreasing number of permissible themes will increase. The writer becomes forced, more and more frequently, to work on material for which he has little interest and perhaps even less stomach. Not only must inferior output be anticipated under such conditions, which automatically lessen the writer's value on the market, but deterioration as a craftsman is an equally certain result.

It is perfectly true that writers, in the past and now, frequently work on themes with which they have little sympathy; it has become an economic necessity which, in these days of unemployment, few writers have been able to withstand. But if the writer felt somewhat unclean intellectually, or morally, when he finished such a job, he usually could wash it away with the firm knowledge that he was simultaneously engaged in making an honest, vigorous fight to help promote greater freedom on the screen in particular, and cultural freedom in all fields of communication generally. There was always, until the birth of the official Blacklist, both the hope for a freer screen and the inalienable right to make a fight for it. This Guild of ours has a proud history in this fight against censorship and for cultural freedom.

Yet today, writers are all but silenced on this matter which is one of economic life and death to the vast majority. Intimidated by the Blacklist, and the fear that a pink slip with Thomas' name on it will be delivered at his door tomorrow morning by a U. S. Marshal has caused the writer to do little more in the way of opposition than whisper cynical anecdotes to his closest friends in the privacy of his study.

It is generally believed that a writer would be headed for economic suicide today were he to advocate publicly Screen Writers' Guild sponsorship of a public forum to discuss, let us say, the subject: "Does Political Censorship Exist in the Motion Picture Industry Today? If so, to what extent are the Motion Picture Producers Collaborationists?" A few years ago, when the Guild brought out its "White Paper" against the Motion Picture Alliance, that subject was considered mild indeed, in comparison with other issues and charges our Guild took a fighting stand on. So, in these few years, what was probably the most discussed subject of the time, is heard today, if at all, as a faint and distant echo.

Of course, if a meeting on some such subject were held, there would be, as in the past, that little man behind the door, checking the names of all who entered. And with equal certainty it can be predicted that others, during the meeting would issue "friendly" warnings against incurring producer "displeasure." Those who were here in 1937, when we reorganized the Guild, and defeated the Screen Playwrights' company union, would recognize many of the old faces, and recall they were among those who then too issued "friendly" warnings. By the sheerest coincidence, many of these "friends," along with members of the Screen Playwrights, turned up ten years later as "friendly witnesses" for the Thomas Committee.

But why the fear today, any more than at that time? As then, there is nothing that *all* writers need fear. As then, when a dozen or more writers were victims of Jack Warner's self-styled "undetectable telephone blacklist" the producers were quick to discover that you can't blacklist five hundred writers. The ban was soon

lifted—even by that pioneer in the field Jack Warner himself. When five hundred writers thumbed a collective nose into the face of the threat, five hundred survived.

But once permit the new tactic to go unchallenged by vigorous protest, and the chipping away process begins—ten today, twenty next month, and fifty the month after that—and it won't be long before the producers will be dusting off the old Screen Playwright contract. They will then succeed in what has long been their goal, the destruction of one of the last truly independent unions in Hollywood, the Screen Writers' Guild.

Throughout these remarks, I have stressed the word 'temporary.' The reason for the emphasis is simply my unshakable belief that this diseased atmosphere of blacklist, intimidation and fear will not endure because it cannot.

The Guild's legal fight against all blacklisting, vigorously prosecuted by Thurman Arnold, will accomplish what it has set out to do. It will not only obtain an injunction against the Blacklist in this industry, it will defeat the hopes of the worst reactionaries in the nation. They see this as the test case for all industry. Were they to win, it would set a precedent in law permitting every employer throughout the country to throw out of work everyone who refused to conform with his political, social or economic views. The Guild will long be remembered—and

honored—for its participation in this aspect of the fight.

The true nature of this fight of the "ten" in all its aspects is becoming clearer day by day. From all over the nation men and women, distinguished and plain, and organizations, religious, cultural, professional and trade union, are coming actively to our support. Amicus curiae briefs are being prepared by some of the nation's most renowned constitutional lawyers and professors of law; they are supporting us in the belief that we are acting in a well-established American tradition. For whenever legislators, high or petty, attempt to distort or contravene the fundamental laws of the land, test cases must be placed before the highest courts, so that all the people, through those elected to represent them, can have their "day in court."

We did not seek election to the roles we have become destined to play. Our numbers were merely the first to be picked out of a hat which then contained hundreds and now holds thousands. When recently Attorney General Tom Clark listed the Hollywood Writers Mobilization as "subversive," and "communist," he dumped into Thomas' hat the names of the entire membership of the Screen Writers Guild, the Publicists Guild, the Story Analysts Guild, the Screen Cartoonists Guild and the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Newspaper Guild.

There are still those who say, "Yes,

yes, all that is true enough, but *you* could have done it *differently*."

There is a different way, I suppose. A man can "run away, and live to fight another day." But you can't run away and at the same time contend that this is an issue all men must stand firm upon, regardless of differences in individual beliefs. The issue then and now, has never been what a man does or does not believe, but rather that no one has the right to inquire into *any* man's beliefs while simultaneously threatening the economic destruction of the person questioned. If this fundamental concept of an American citizen's rights fails to survive, so will the United States as it has been known to the world since the Alien and Sedition laws were abolished one hundred and fifty years ago.

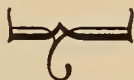
—
And so time flies!

On the First Anniversary of the Blacklist, the Thomas Committee announced it was going to hold another "Hollywood Hearing." And this time his hat holds thousands of numbers where only a year ago it held hundreds. The fire is spreading; that's why the alarm is sounded again.

If you should find yourself, like the man in the fable, running out into the street yelling "Fire," pause for a moment. Look around calmly.

Perhaps, like him, you too will discover it to be — your own house.

LESTER COLE



Screen Writers' Guild Studio Chairmen (October 1, 1948)

Columbia — Ted Sherdeman.

MGM — George Wells; Studio Committee: Sonya Levien, Joseph Ansen, Robert Nathan.

Paramount — Richard Breen.

Republic — Albert Demond; alternate, Norman Hall.

RKO — Daniel Mainwaring; alternate, Martin Rackin.

Fox — Richard Murphy; alternate, Wanda Tuchock.

Universal-International — Oscar Brodney.

Warner Brothers — Henry Ephron; alternate, Harriet Frank.

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"IN PRAISE OF FOLLY"

In Chicago:

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I Remember No One

(Continued from Page 3)

"Mother unfortunately had little servant trouble as proved by the fact that she kept one cook for ten years and another one for twenty-one years. The twenty year one was named Lillie." Lillie, I decided, might be played in the movies by Louise Beavers or Hattie McDaniels except that Lillie was thin and not very amusing though she made first rate matzoh ball soup. Maybe if I had her burn the soup and the smoke would rise. . . . No, Lillie would sue me sure. I'd better stick to facts.

RUTH McKENNY wrote amusingly about her sister. And I had a sister! "My sister, Evelyn, went to Wellesley. Sometimes she attended houseparties at Yale. So far as I know she was always popular and behaved herself well. At the age of twenty, she married a well-to-do man from a very fine family. Now she lives in Minneapolis and has two

lovely children. They too will probably to to Wellesley someday, except for the boy He has his application in at Harvard . . ."

About my brother Harry. I placed a second sheet in my typewriter for the twelfth time.

"Harry was always a swell guy. He went to college but did not go in much for sports since he was not very athletic. He did not join any literary clubs either so far as I know since he was not very literary. I think that even if he had played football he would have had sense enough not to run down the field the wrong way. And as for winning the game for his alma mater in the last minute of play, well, believe me, you don't know Harry. When he graduated he went into business with my father because Father wanted him to. He married also. A girl from West Virginia. From a good family. She has made him a wonderful wife and they now have three children, all boys. None will go to Wellesley."

I shook the aspirin box. None left.

Maybe I could write about the things I'd done in my youth. Sure. Then I'd be able to get all the facts right. A lot of odd things must have happened to me.

"I went to the same college my brother went to and I joined the fraternity he was a member of. Mother said if I'd been a girl she would have sent me to Wellesley but I would not have been a member of the same sorority my Sister was since my Sister did not join a sorority. (My mother sometimes says very clever things like that.) She did not, however, go to any college. Not even Wellesley. I think she is what is known as 'a natural wit'."

SUDDENLY my tired gaze fell upon the title of a book in the case. "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay." Gee, I went to Europe when I was sixteen! And if Emily Kimbrough and Cornelia Otis Skinner could tell about their experiences. . . . Yeah, Europe.

I could write about that time in Monte Carlo! (Not the night club

which closed but the town of that name in Monaco, which is a principality.) A flush came to my cheeks. Sure! It was there I . . . I . . . I could tell about that incident on the Riviera (not the night club). I found myself doing very well with the hunt and peck system.

"At sixteen I went to Europe with two other young fellows. Since, however, they were twenty-one and I was under age I was not allowed in the gaming casino at Monte Carlo, (not the . . .). They left me sitting on a park bench in the square and soon a Lady approached me. She told me I was a bright young fellow and asked if I had five dollars. Since I do not understand French very well and since she was a French lady I am not sure about her saying I was bright but I am sure she asked for five dollars since that part was in

English. I asked her if she was too young to go into the Casino also and I remember she laughed, being forty or upward. Then she asked me (or demonstrated)—my memory is slightly hazy at this point—if I would like to go to her room with her. I said I would since I had nothing to lose. I guess I was wrong, however. Since it was with her that I lost it.

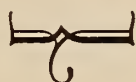
"I remember I worried for about ten days after that and the fellows travelling with me thought it was because I had not been allowed in the Casino, being too young. I did not tell them what really occurred since I knew they would have felt badly about going in to gamble and leaving me like that."

That wasn't bad, I decided, but what would the Johnston office say? Likely they'd insist that all the inter-

esting part in the room would have to be deleted. Maybe though that part could be done with a dissolve. Still, everything in my life that has been interesting would have to be handled that way and—well, you can't do a whole picture in dissolves.

I had to go back to Joe and tell him that so far as my family was concerned, I couldn't write a "remember" story. It was, I think, the first time I ever saw him get so angry. He seemed highly displeased with me and all my relatives. He mumbled something about what my parents needed was a good five cent neurosis. I left him still fiddling with his tie and rubbing his hairy hand over his hairless head.

One thing I remember: All the way home I kept thinking—now if only *my brother* had gone to Wellesley. . . .



Roderick Bentley Rides Again

By

DAVID CHANDLER

HIS symptoms were not unusual but unmistakable. He grew testy, short-tempered and a little irritated at all writers ten years his junior. He worried about his hair and found himself writing things like, "He was a young man of forty-five, in the full prime of life," at the same time that he really felt that forty-five wasn't young. As for that stuff about prime of life, he grew quite belligerent about it. He felt that he was a better lover than he'd ever been now, at his age, a better man, and certainly a better writer.

And yet Roderick Bentley felt curiously deflated. He had been feeling that way for some time. He'd been writing professionally, which is to say, more or less earning a living by words on paper, for a long time. He had been through dry periods before, periods when everything that came from his typewriter seemed to him stale, uninspired and pedestrian. But it had never been as now. He wasn't turning

out as much copy as he used to; but he did not even have the satisfaction of feeling that what little he was turning out was good, represented the fine, full flavor of his maturing talents.

He grew furious, frightened, afraid he would run out of ideas. A veteran of countless battles over scripts with collaborators, producers and directors, he found himself tense before going into conference. Privately—for he would not even mention this to his best friends or his agent—he felt insecure. It was like a pitcher losing his stuff. He held the ball just as he always had; his windup was no different, if anything, improved. And yet there was no stuff on the old ball; it didn't break sharp, it had a bad tendency to miss the plate and, to be blunt about it, the fast ball just wasn't fast.

WHETHER this was true or not about Roderick Bentley no one knew for sure. Certainly he did

not. But he *felt* it was true, which is the same thing, or, possibly, worse. He found himself making less money in 1948 than in 1947, when he had made less than in 1946, when, to be sure, he had not equalled 1945. He invented all kinds of excuses. In '46 there was the war and reconversion—you couldn't very well blame *him* for that, Bentley felt. And in '47, well there was a strike and the studios started trimming costs by firing janitors, messenger girls and him. (He'd been fired many times in his life before, always landing on his feet, frequently in better spots than he'd been bounced from. But now he felt all this talk of cutting deadwood was directed toward him personally.)

There were always excuses, but they never really helped. He tried not to be lazy, despite the fact that he could never achieve the output of ten years ago. He wrote stories again and a play and an original or two, up-to-the-minute, yet mature, sincere

stuff. Those were his words. (The word mature was often in his vocabulary.)

The reactions he got troubled Bentley. "What's happened, Bent?" a story editor would write. "Have you lost your zing? I still remember . . ." and they'd mention an old script that had done well years before. They'd constantly remind him of the days when his stuff had carried the unmistakable hallmark of the sure, fresh hand. When his curve-ball would drop at the plate and his fast ball was a holy terror.

Being a writer, of course, Bentley knew nothing of writers and their tics and phobias, their unnamed fears and terrors in the night. He had written, and well, and authoritatively, of men in death row, foxholes, psychiatric wards, men trapped in submarines, beleaguered desert forts and marriage, and he knew all about his characters. They were soldiers, sailors, chaplains, ski instructors, firemen, clerks and lumberjacks and he knew them all well. But he knew nothing about writers. If he had, of course, he might have understood his recent mood. Ignorant of his own kind, he had nothing to go on and he looked eagerly in every direction for a course of action.

IT was not long in coming to him. He read that one studio was not buying any new stories, that it was going to dip into its accumulated inventory, that it was going to remake all its old successes. The joke was current that another lot, doing nothing was being called Remake Something or Other. *They* were busy doing nothing but remaking their old pictures. The ads in the trade papers blazoned slogans like "Proven Hits." When the studios weren't making remakes, they were doing sequels.

In a flash of illumination that can only be characterized as inspiration, a word he, as a professional, detested, Bentley had an idea. What was good enough for the studios would be good enough for him. If *they* could *remake*, why, by jingo, so could he.

He found his old scripts all over the house, in the cellar, in his daugh-

ter's desk, propping up a bureau in his son's room. They were in cartons out in the garage; he even found one in his dog's house. He started writing like mad. He remembered that Shaw was just about his age when he started making money. Gide hadn't hit his stride until his forties; Maugham and Melville and Anatole France. He snapped his fingers at all the sensitive young men with one play behind them who always seemed to be making the "Scribbling" column in *Daily Variety*. Wait, he thought, till they'd been through all he'd been through. Would they have staying power? That's the question, he thought.

He rewrote his first story, the one about two fellows who worked a plantation in South America, the one wanting to quit all the time, the other conniving to keep him in the tropics. He freshened it with allusions to Reds, nuclear fission and the "Queen Elizabeth." It was as good as ever.

He did a rewrite on his charming (he had had an extended period of being "charming" in his youth) story about the poetical young man who lives behind the lion cage in the Central Park zoo, who falls in love with the picture of a girl in the society page, the girl he meets in the rain when her Yorkshire terrier breaks his leash and runs to him.

That powerful story of *Man Against Elements*—how they pushed the tunnel through when everybody said it couldn't be done, that it was sheer madness, and how when they had done it the man had lost his best friend and won a wife.

His screwball comedy about the husband who isn't sure of his wife so he gets his best friend to pretend to make love to his wife only the best friend falls in love and the wife, not to be dumb, plays along with the best friend and in turn gets her best friend—well, that was as good as ever.

And he re-did his story about men against death, the pals who, in three versions he had written years before (he was surprised to find he had done this years ago) had matched themselves against submarines, airplanes

and Zeppelins. It was a natural for jet airplanes and supersonic speeds. The wife could still chew her fingernails at home, begging her husband to give up jets—this time—and in the big scene, the devil-may-care hero who found himself falling in love with the wife, his best friend's wife, of course, got up earlier and hopped into the experimental jet her husband was scheduled to fly and pushed it so hard that it flattened out against the supersonic wall like a tomato, but not before he had radioed the men on the ground what he was up against so that it would never happen again.

BENTLEY prospered. His hair he was sure, started growing again. He lost weight, admitted "The Naked and the Dead" was quite a good book, despite its author's extreme youth, and was planning a trip to France next summer to spend some blocked francs. He started running himself just like a studio. He made his wife rise at the same hour every morning. His kids followed a strict regimen, having to punch in and out every day. The cook and the maid-laundress were subjected to rigid time-motion studies to make sure they functioned with "optimum efficiency." He fired the gardener and got a school-boy. If Economy was the answer in the studios, Economy and Remakes, it would be the answer for Bentley. He bawled out his girl for using too many carbons, for sharpening pencils unnecessarily and for changing pencils when there was some workable lead left in the stub. He grew strict about typewriter ribbons, outgoing phone calls and electric bills and unnecessary use of water and towels.

So at last Roderick Bentley had found peace, happiness and security. He might even have been content. But despite everything, he was still troubled, especially late at night when sleep was hard to achieve. What, he thought, when I finish remaking all my stories, what then? He would toss nervously in bed. Can I remake the remakes? He decided he would face this problem when the studios faced it. That enabled him to sleep, for the time being at least.

Rather Warm for Christmas

A SHORT STORY

By

CURT SIODMAK

WHEN Jack Kelton came out of the house on Rodeo Drive, Clayworth, the colored man, was in the back seat of the Cadillac, attaching a sprig of holly to the rear visor. Just then a railway express truck cut a short curve and came up the driveway. Kelton watched the expressmen. They pulled parcels out of the overloaded wagon, dumped them one after another on the lawn, checked their invoices, hurried around into the cab and backed out of the driveway. The parcels, sprawled out over the lawn, seemed to litter up the place.

"Mrs. Kelton wants you to pick up the handbags she ordered on Beverly Drive. She wants you to take the handbags to the studio," Clayworth said, getting out of the car. He had a highpitched voice. "I better put the address of the store in the car or else you forget." He squeezed a piece of paper under the windshield wiper. "Mrs. Kelton says you better be home early, sir. You better on account of all the drunken drivers."

Kelton slid into the car.

"Want to have the top down?" Clayworth said. "It's warm today, warmest Christmas I remember."

"Everybody says that every Christmas out here," Kelton said. "They're all the warmest Christmas." He had the motor running and slowly backed out into the street.

A stream of cars speeded along Santa Monica Boulevard. The sun was beating down in a white, unhealthy glare. The thermometer in the car showed eighty-three.

The lampposts on Santa Monica were fixed up with cardboard Santa Clauses, each one of them twelve or

fifteen feet high. They lined the street on both sides in a petrified procession and looked sheepish in the bright sunshine. Every gas station had stacks of Christmas trees for sale. The trees were sprayed with pastel colors—piebald, canary, and reseda. Kelton found, miraculously, an empty space for his car not very far away from the handbag shop.

The place was crowded with the last minute buying rush—most of the girls in slacks, their hair in curlers, their faces without makeup. Kelton was the only man among them. A worn-out saleslady spotted him and brought out a score of parcels, each one individually wrapped and trimmed with gay ribbons.

"Where did you leave your car, Mr. Kelton?" she asked.

"Just load the parcels on my arms," Kelton said.

The overstuffed Santa Clauses follow him down to Wilshire Boulevard where the lampposts changed to enormous reindeer pulling cardboard sleighs. Kelton thought of the bourbon he would be obliged to swallow at the studio. He didn't like to drink before midday, but every year they did it. For the last two days now the studio had been gripped by the usual spirit of general disintegration.

"Merry Christmas, Mr. Kelton," Eddy said, and saluted. Eddy was the cop at gate "A." "Rather warm for Christmas." He stood in the narrow doorway of his booth. Behind him, all around, were heaps of colored parcels. The long studio street, lined with houses, each built in a different style, was empty. Kelton drove his car to his bungalow. He knew everyone was already on Stage 20.

Kelton's secretary, Miss Clark, looked up. She was working behind stacks of Christmas cards and used the waste paper basket to hold all the envelopes. The small outer office was bulging with parcels of all shapes and sizes.

"Merry Christmas," she said.

"Merry Christmas," Kelton said.

"We got seven hundred cards more this Christmas than last, on account of your success with 'The Great Marauder.' We'll have to answer all of them. I ran out of your personal cards so I bought a couple of hundred printed cards in Hollywood. Would you mind signing a few of them?"

"How about you signing them, Miss Clark?" Kelton said.

"They go to people who know your signature," Miss Clark said. "I've ordered a pickup truck to take your presents home."

Kelton looked at the parcels which cluttered his desk. "I've got a few more presents in my car," he said to Miss Clark, "In case we run short. What a Goddamned waste."

Miss Clark giggled. "Not when you *get* them," she said. "It's all deductible isn't it?" Kelton figured Miss Clark had already had a few drinks. He picked up the pad which listed all the people she was sending presents to. She had worked out the list according to a sliding scale of her own devising. A good many of the names meant nothing to him, but he knew they represented switchboard girls, unit manager, secretaries to the different heads of departments, people like that. He put the pad down and started signing the Christmas cards.

(Continued on Page 26)

Comment

(Continued from Inside Front Cover)

At first I said, "All right. So you're bored. It's your fault."

But after a while I wasn't so sure.

My cook was staying away from pictures too.

And so was the man who gave me gas down the street at the station. He and his three kids had compromised on Westerns. Some of them. He was really unhappy after taking his family to see *Duel In the Sun*. And that cost five, or was it six million dollars?

Finally I began to make a list of those shows that gave me the urge to leave before the final fade out. It covered quite a range. Psychological dramas, Historical stories, Fantasy, Musicals, Comedies. Oh yes, and War stories. That left Murder Mysteries and Westerns, and not all of those.

When the Murder Mysteries stopped being fun and games, and when the Westerns just rode and rode and rode, and you didn't care, that old urge to find the exit rose up again.

THEN I became annoyed. That about blanketed the industry. "For the love of Pete," I asked myself, "What *do* you like? And if you don't like any of them, why?"

That took a bit of thinking, but I did get a few answers.

I discovered that I enjoyed one here or there, in *all* classes.

It was just the majority I was against.

For example I made it a must to see all the musicals that have been coming out of one of our biggest studios for the past three or four years, just to see if I could find *one* I did like. I *know* they made money. But they have a large and efficient publicity department, too.

But *why* didn't I like them?

Well, it was like a peppermint stick festival. All icing and no cake. Color, songs, dances, and elaborate sets. But no story. No *people*. There was no magic. I didn't *believe* them. I know musicals aren't supposed to have a story. But—well, take the old Fred Astaires. Now *they* were good. Heck!

The old George M. Cohan Broadway shows were good. He may have waved the flag, but the shows had feeling. That's it *Feeling. Spirit. Fun!*

The new shows didn't have any.

Even the Disneys seemed to be assembly line made. Constructed, not felt. Not believed.

You can't tell fairy stories unless you believe in them.

You can't make the audience feel unless you feel yourself.

You can't assemble plots and bits of stories and situations which have no relationship to one another and make them get across.

STORIES are much like plants. They grow out of themselves. Out of the impulse that gives them origination. Good or bad, it doesn't matter. They hold together. They have feeling. Integrity. They pass that feeling along to the actors, the audience. Even the reviewers.

Yes, I thought. "This may be a key."

Maybe we have been too smart. Too clever.

Maybe we think too much and feel too little.

I remembered a producer who wanted a writer to create a picture that would make three million dollars, because another one had made five million, and this before a story had even been considered.

I remembered the times that plot, situation, dialogue, were pre-set to actors, whose interest was only in *their* part.

I remembered the time when thirteen or fourteen scripts were developed for almost as many people to agree upon, the finished product being an assembly of all of them.

Thinking about it, it seemed a miracle that any motivation, any sincerity, any reality, could survive the impact of so many demands from exploitation, producer, associate producer, story boards, gag men, casting, director, all thinking along different lines.

And yet . . . if a story could be written *first* . . .

If the demand upon the writer, and upon himself was to *feel* the situations, *feel* the characters, *feel* the

development—instead of thinking it out by formula. . . .

If the motivation was held to, and nothing which did not arise out of that motivation was accepted. . . .

It would be interesting to see what would happen.

It might be fun to go to pictures again.

It might even be fun to write them.

It might be, that getting back to *creative* standards would do more for *us*, and the pictures, than anything else we could do.

The Lost Fellowship

By ELIOT GIBBONS

IN the long and too often tedious history of the theater it would seem that the subject of the vanished audience offers nothing new in the way of tragedy. Greeks and Romans alike adequately lamented it. The convenient explanation usually has been rather simple: some new found attraction in the field of orgy, athletics, or religion. Actually, the cause may have lain deeper, and the proof of this might be found in evidence that these audiences did not wander back until considerable changes had occurred in the theater to attract them afresh.

Like a growing proportion of the adult population of the land I am finding movies increasingly tough to take. Many, because it is their privilege, stay away. Because it is my trade I continue to go, but, as often as not, ten minutes is all I can take—nor do I hurry home to turn on any television or radio.

Like many of us I have been inclined to blame the various Munich agreements into which the Johnston Office has been forced by various pressure groups—agreements by which the movies have been ruled into using only the already stale words of the interested groups when treating their particular subjects. These pressure groups are losing their audiences too,

and, following the same road, to that proportion so must the movies. But I am less convinced now that there is the final answer.

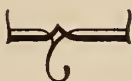
Sitting through as much as I or my companion could take of a particular high budget terror the other night, I began to brood upon the fact that there was not one character in that picture with whom I, or even my attractive companion, could by any stretch of the imagination identify ourselves. The next step in this line of reasoning was what character could anyone in that audience identify him or herself with? The answer was, none. Ten years ago, perhaps. The habit of going to the movies is a strong one; so, too, that of listening to the same story. Which may explain the lag.

BUT now we discover that we are looking at a race of hypocrites on the screen who are neither themselves nor could they possibly be us. What right have they to continue, in smirking certitude, in that very world that even the stupidest of us realizes has fallen apart and left us to move on or perish? Or, even more revolting, to parade that same smirking certitude, punctuated by wisecracks, through the heartbreaking ruins of Europe?

What our people have lost with respect to their movies is their sense of fellowship and trust. Once we were one with our movies; no matter how shabbily and crudely expressed, they were our beliefs, and we stood by them. The beliefs were just as false then as they are now—but we could

believe them then—and they had the full weight of the sincerity of their presentation and of their acceptance. Gloria Swanson was never the American shopgirl, but we could believe her to be. That was the value of the idea.

The new beliefs which are shaping in the thoughts of people may be just as false in the light of ultimate truth as the shopgirl legend. Their value is the same, that we can sincerely accept them—they are my beliefs and those of the people around me. When we find such people reflected in any recognizable shape upon the screen, I and others will flock gratefully back to the theaters, for the fellowship that will relieve an aesthetic loneliness which has grown well nigh unbearable.



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Curt Siodmak

(Continued from Page 23)

SOMEBODY pressed his head against the fly-screen of the open window. It was Appleton, the chief grip. "Merry Christmas, Mr. Kelton," Appleton said. Behind him stood three of his men, their faces already flushed. They kept polite, but their eyes looked mischievous.

"Come on in, Appleton. Bring your boys and have a drink." Kelton got up and opened the built-in bar. Appleton and his men didn't sit down. They stood stiffly, had a couple of straight ones apiece and then departed to collect some more loot at the other offices. They probably didn't enjoy the drinks any more than Kelton did.

"The messenger girls are leaving in a few minutes," Miss Clark said. "They have to be off before twelve, so I'd better send out the cards. The Production office doesn't want the kids around when the parties get going. Last year . . ." She checked herself and changed the subject. "A couple of those gorgeous handbags are left. Don't you have a—special address you want me to send a present to?"

Her voice was casual, but there was no doubt about it. She had had a few drinks, all right. "You keep one, Miss Clark," he said dryly. He never called her by her first name.

"Oh, thank you," Miss Clark said. She was really glad to get the handbag and looked it. "And what shall we do with the last one?"

"Let me get rid of it," Kelton said. "Thanks and Merry Christmas."

"Then you won't need me any more today?" Miss Clark said.

"Run along and have a good time. I'll see you on Stage 20." He closed the door. To his surprise he went over to the bar and poured himself a drink. He saw Miss Clark crossing the street toward Stage 20. The party was probably well under way.

Miss Clark had done a lot of work on the mantelpiece of the fake fireplace, artfully arranging two or three hundred Christmas cards. Some of these cards had Santa Clauses working on springs; some had trees and animals which unfolded when the

cards were opened; one had a built-in electric light. Kelton thought there were more Gauguins and Van Goghs this year than ever before.

The telephone started to buzz, Kelton didn't turn. He started picking up cards systematically destroying the careful work that Miss Clark had done. Kelton didn't stop until the whole artful show was ruined. The phone buzzed again and now he went to it.

"Mr. Kelton?" Cochran's secretary said. "Mr. Cochran wants you to drop in on Stage 20 before you go home."

"I'll be over," Kelton said and hung up. The party was Cochran's idea. He made a big fuss over it every year. Cochran really liked to drink and it made him feel good or respectable to have everyone else drink a lot too.

KELTON now found himself looking at a cheap offset print which showed a bunny dressed as Santa Claus. A girl's stiff handwriting had signed it. Jeanne Marsden. Kelton didn't recall the name until he saw the handwriting, small and microscopic, in the corner. "Sorry I inconvenienced you by not sending the book in time. Jeanne Marsden, Research Department."

A girl in the research department was sorry. . . . He remembered he had ordered a book on Creole music and hadn't received it for days. He had put too much force in his voice or something when he called up about the book and the research department seemed to fly apart like an ant-heap stirred up by a stick. Then a girl had shown up with the book, excited, trembling, almost in tears. But for his interference she would have lost her job. Kelton hadn't read the book after all. It was still standing on the shelf.

The last card was signed. Kelton got up reluctantly, sorry to have finished with the cards. It was ten past twelve and cars passed his window, already leaving for home.

Kelton took the handbag and stepped out into the glaring sun, on his way to Stage 20. Again, the studio streets were unnaturally quiet,

as though pictures were made by termites, working noiselessly in underground darkness.

A girl came out of the writers' building. She was thin, had slightly bent legs and mouse brown hair which swallowed the light. Her face seemed to shrink as she stopped before him and she pushed her glasses back on her stubby nose.

"Merry Christmas," she said.

"Merry Christmas," Kelton said, smiling. He always smiled warmly as a matter of course with the lower-paid employees.

"I hope you've forgiven me," the girl said.

"Oh," Kelton said. "Jeanne Marsden. Hello, Miss Marsden. Merry Christmas."

"Yes, Mr. Kelton," the girl said, beaming, a little breathless.

"To tell the truth, I haven't even looked at the book," Kelton said.

"Well, that's perfectly all right," she said eagerly. "I understand. You're very busy. . . ."

"Not at all," Kelton said, and suddenly he was anxious to get away. Somehow he had the feeling he was taking advantage of the girl. "Thank you very much for your nice Christmas card," he said, and started to go, but she stopped him.

"Oh, you saw it?" she said, almost gasping.

"Naturally," Kelton said. "I read them all."

"You do?" She stared at him. Her blue eyes were cut down to half-size by her heavy glasses.

"I think everyone reads all his Christmas cards," Kelton said, annoyed and unsteady. "I think they even count them. Why shouldn't they? Everybody wants to know how many people remember them. Here," he said, handing her the last handbag, surprising himself. "Here's a little present for you. Merry Christmas."

"Oh," the girl said. "Oh . . ."

But before she could pull herself together, Kelton was gone, feeling disorganized and mixed-up and inadequate.

A long bar had been set up on Stage 20 and all the staff and crews were there. A band was playing. Three

bartenders poured whiskey and gin from bottles. They tried to serve everybody at once and the top of the bar was unbelievably wet and messy. Kelton shook hands with everyone who came near him, kept on smiling all the time, patted people on the back and got patted on his back in return. He saw Miss Clark holding a glass and talking to a tall studio cop. He couldn't hear her voice but noticed her using little intimate gestures he had never seen her use before. Kelton had a drink with Cochran who was half stupefied by alcohol, shook more hands, accepted invitations to drop by next day at different houses, never stopped laughing or chattering, nor did he stop pushing his way through the crowd and in the end he was at the back door of the huge stage and he was through with it.

The sun had moved behind the water-tower. It was cool now. A gust of wind blew through the open door of stage twenty-one and carried the clammy bland smell of lumber, hemp and rubber. Kelton crossed the empty stage and walked over to the publicity building.

He had to talk to the publicity department. It was a standard ritual that the big ones once a year had to drop by and fraternize with the lowly. The rickety stairs leading to the upper floor creaked and groaned under his weight. The offices all opened up around a courtyard, like a bull ring, except that in the arena here three gnarled palm trees grew.

Kelton stepped out on the balcony and listened. Somewhere a lonely typewriter clicked slowly as though it was being worked by one finger. A girl giggled some distance away and then she stopped giggling. Kelton went into the publicity offices but they were already deserted. He went to the water cooler for a drink but the porter hadn't bothered putting ice into the contraption and the water tasted oily. Kelton sat down and scrutinized the walls. They were plastered with advertising signs, pictures of the company's contract players, pictures cut out of magazines and newspapers. Kelton tried to find pictures about his own films, but there

were only two and he soon lost interest.

A forgotten Christmas card was lying on the desk in front of him. It was an expensively lithographed Currier and Ives print, a sled speeding through softly falling snow. The house in the background, an English Colonial, looked homey and peaceful and was surrounded by large fir trees whose limbs bent low under the heavy weight of the snow.

KELTON remembered the night his nose froze while he was asleep in a towering featherbed. He remembered the mornings he had to break through the thin crust of ice that had formed in his wash basin. Kelton had been born in Minnesota, had lived there until he was eighteen and went East to college. Kelton remembered the humming light of the gas candelabra in the "parlor" of his home in Minnesota. The parlor was really lit up only on festive occasions like Christmas or when somebody got married. Kelton remembered the consoling warmth of the long wool stockings he used to wear as a boy. . . .

It was very quiet except for the cars leaving by the studio gate. Kelton didn't want to go home. There would be dozens of people there, more hands to shake, more backs to slap, more eating and drinking, you saying it to them and they saying it to you and nobody really giving a damn about the whole thing one way or the other. Kelton liked the office. If you kept on working and worrying, it was all right. The thing was not to stop, not to break the routine.

The balcony outside started to creak. Somebody was coming up and Kelton wondered who it was.

"Mr. Kelton," a small voice said. It was Jeanne Marsden. Her lipstick looked fresh. The girl stepped closer. She held the handbag high in the air, swinging it lightly. Kelton felt trapped, as though he had been caught doing something wrong, as though he had been found in a strange office where he had no right to be.

"Mr. Kelton," she said. "I saw you walking up and I came here

because I wanted to thank you for the beautiful present. I never had such a beautiful present, I never had."

The girl had had a drink. Kelton got up.

"I'm glad you like it," he said.

To his astonishment he felt a small warm pain in his throat. It was the way he used to feel when he was a boy and waited in front of the parlor for the door to be opened.

The girl pushed a strand of her mouse brown hair out of her face, shifted her glasses well up on her nose and stepped even closer.

"You know, you didn't say Merry Christmas very nicely," she said. "You said it so coldly. It's Christmas, you know."

"Merry Christmas, Miss Marsden," he said, in a nervous hurry to leave.

She lifted up on her toes and stretched her cheek out toward him. "Merry Christmas, Jack," she said. "Kiss?"

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Miscellany

Anybody got any stories that will fit into a Canadian background? *The Screen Writer* has a letter from Joseph Than, in charge of production for Canadian Screen Productions, Ltd., 4824 Cotes des Neiges Road, Montreal, 26. This company is establishing a new Canadian film industry and will release ten pictures through Allied Artists and Monogram.

Earle Snell is under contract, Leonard Fields is associated in production, and Millard Lampell has a one picture deal.

Mr. Than writes:

"We need eight stories . . . outdoor subjects, melodramas, comedies—any good ideas adaptable to Canadian backgrounds. You not only have a chance to sell your material, but to come here and work on the shooting scripts as well. We are in position to pay in American dollars."

Harold Goldman's story of a perfect murder, *The Silent Witness*, appeared in the September 25th issue of *Collier's Magazine*.

John Klempner, whose novel, *Letter to Five Wives*, is the basis for 20th Century Fox's *Three Wives*, has had a new novel published by *Scribner's*, called *Hurry, Hurry Home*.

A copy of a letter from Niven Busch which he wrote to Paul Gallico, President of the Authors' League, will be of interest to those of the SWG membership who have material published in other media before it is offered for sale to the motion picture companies.

Because of the unfavorable market, Mr. Busch and his agent and publisher

agreed to withhold the manuscript of his forthcoming novel, *The Furies*, from the market until six weeks before its publication, for the purpose of securing simultaneous competitive bidding.

To this end, all available galleys were locked in safes and working galleys protected against possibility of theft. Nevertheless, a synopsis of the novel, based on a bootlegged galley, turned up in the possession of the studios long before the designated time, forcing the marketing of the novel in unpropitious circumstances.

The only conclusion that can be drawn is a bit on the melodramatic side. Mr. Busch writes: "One informed source has assured me that studios can secure priority readings of any property in which they are interested by buying special galleys from printing house employees who work on a well established pay scale (from \$100 to \$500) bootlegging material they consider hot for the screen. Whether this is true or not, I have no way of knowing, but the experience just recounted leads me to feel that it is. While this is not a matter which concerns many writers, it is of vital interest to those affected by it."

Mr. Busch has requested the Authors' League to investigate the situation in his case and recommends that other writers be on their guard against this practice.

James Webb has sold a serial called *Going, Going, Gone* to the *Saturday Evening Post*.

Martin Field's Hollywood column is now being syndicated in 28 newspapers here and abroad.

Without Comment:

Editor,
Screen Writer Magazine.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed find my check for \$5 to cover renewal of my *Screen Writer* subscription.

I am now beginning my third year with *Screen Writer*. It's been a pretty nice experience. As a student writer, I've felt privileged to be on the inside of the discussions of writer's problems. It's been somewhat like muscling in on a discussion by bigwigs, and wondering if you're going to be found out and thrown out.

But I believe the Guild gains by including outside readers of the magazine. One doesn't have to read many issues to swing over to your side. In my case, that was accomplished many months ago.

May I offer my congratulations to you on the excellent job you are doing?

Meyer M. Cahn,
Member, Authors' Guild

The Actors' Laboratory will produce Ben Bengal's one-act play, *The Lucky Cup*, in October. The organization is seeking "good, new plays." The address is 1455 N. Laurel Ave., Hollywood 46, attention of Mrs. Rayme Ellis.

Theatre Americana, 861 North Sierra Bonita Avenue, Pasadena 7, California, has an annual authors' competition, in which the \$100 Frederick Warde Prize is awarded for the best original play produced during the current season.

This group is a non-profit organization. "Plays are eligible which have

In Memoriam

PERETZ HIRSHBEIN

1880 - 1948

three acts, are of the American scene or by American authors and which have not derived financial benefit from their playing or prizes for their production, or been listed with any commercial, or semi-professional theatre or play broker. This does not exclude plays that have had strictly amateur production."

Jesse Lasky, Jr.'s second novel for Prentice-Hall, entitled *September Song*, will be published in the spring of 1949.

Stanley Richards' one act play, *Through A Glass Darkly*, which was published by Dodd, Mead & Co., as one of the best one act plays of 1947-48, will be published in an individual edition by the Banner Play Bureau in October, and had its first production at the University of Western Ontario, directed by Day Tuttle. Richards' *Beyond the Shadow*, which deals with tuberculosis and its cure, will be produced throughout Long Island by the Public Health Association, beginning in the autumn.

Harold Goldman, who's been a

busy man, announces further that the Daniel Mayer Company of London has extended its option on his play, *Twice and Forever*, and that his story *The Key In the Lock*, appears in Dutton's anthology of the best detective stories of 1948.

The Newsmen's Commission to Investigate the Murder of George Polk is soliciting voluntary contributions of funds to carry on its work. They are sending John Donovan of NBC, Constantine Poulos, Overseas News Agency and William Polk George Polk's brother, to Greece to pursue the investigation. Money is needed for this purpose. The address is 133 West 44th Street, New York City.

The following letter was received by the Group Insurance Committee:

My thanks go to you for urging me to participate in our Guild's Group Insurance.

The \$220.00 check I recently received to cover a four and a half week illness came with the utmost dispatch and the least embarrassment or inconvenience. I suppose the best

tribute to any insurance firm is to say that they pay their claims promptly and willingly.

I am convinced that this group insurance plan is a long step forward in our Guild's fight for the Screen Writer's security.

Again my thanks.

Sincerely,
J. H. Warner

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A LISTING OF SCREEN WRITERS' CREDITS
EARNED ON FEATURE PRODUCTIONS
OF CURRENT AND RECENT RELEASE

CREDITS

AUGUST 15, 1948 TO SEPTEMBER 15, 1948

A

FELIX ADLER
Sole Story and Screenplay CLUNKED IN THE CLINK, Col.
EDWARD ANHALT
Sole Screenplay and Joint Story (with David Dressler) THE CRIME DOCTOR'S DIARY, Col.
MICHAEL ARLEN
Character Basis A DATE WITH MURDER (Falcon Prod.) Film Classics
ART ARTHUR
Joint Screenplay (with Kenneth Perkins) SONG OF INDIA, Gibraltar Pictures

B

SALLY BENSON
*Contributor to Screenplay LITTLE WOMEN, MGM
EDWARD BERNDS
Story and Screenplay MICROSPOOK, (S), Col.
ROBERT BLEES
Joint Screenplay (with Charles Schnee) BITTER VICTORY, (Hal Wallis Prod.) Par.
MALCOLM STUART BOYLAN
Sole Screenplay THE LONE WOLF AND HIS LADY, Col.
GEORGE BRANDT
Sole Story and Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS L 8-1 (S) (Jerry Fairbanks) Par.
Sole Story and Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS L 8-2 (S), (Jerry Fairbanks) Par.
Sole Story and Screenplay POULAR SCIENCE J 8-1 (S), (Jerry Fairbanks) Par.
Sole Story and Screenplay POULAR SCIENCE J 8-2 (S), (Jerry Fairbanks) Par.
Sole Story and Screenplay UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS L 8-3, (S), (Jerry Fairbanks) Par.
LOU BRESLOW
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Joseph Hoffman) AN INNOCENT AFFAIR (Nassour Prod.) U.A.
GEORGE BRUCE
Sole Screenplay WALK A CROOKED MILE (Ed Small Prod.) Col.
W. R. BURNETT
Sole Story and Screenplay BELLE STARR'S DAUGHTER, Alson Productions
FRANK BURT
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Robert Libott) THE LAW OF THE BARBARY COAST, Col.
Joint Screenplay (with Robert Libott) AIR HOSTESS, Col.
*Academy Bulletin Only
*Academy Bulletin Only
*Academy Bulletin Only

C

ELMER CLIFTON
Sole Story and Screenplay QUICK ON THE TRIGGER, Col.
ROYAL K. COLE
Joint Story (with Sherman L. Lowe) PAROLE, Eagle-Lion
BETTY COMDEN
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Adolph Green) THE BARKLEYS OF BROADWAY, MGM

D

EDWARD DEIN
Sole Story THE LONE WOLF AND HIS LADY, Col.
HELEN DEUTSCH
Joint Screenplay (with Samuel Fuller) THE LOVERS, Col.
I. A. L. DIAMOND
Sole Story TWO GUYS AND A GAL, WB
DAVID DRESSLER
Joint Story (with Edward Anhalt) THE CRIME DOCTOR'S DIARY, Col.
WARREN DUFF
Sole Screenplay ONE WOMAN, Par.

E

RICHARD ENGLISH
Story Basis LOSER TAKE ALL, Col.

F

SAMUEL FULLER
Joint Screenplay (with Helen Deutsch) THE LOVERS, Col.

G

IVAN GOFF
Joint Screenplay (with Larry Marcus and Ben Roberts) SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY, WB
ADOLPH GREEN
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Betty Comden) THE BARKLEYS OF BROADWAY, MGM

H

NORMAN S. HALL
Story and Screenplay SUNDOWN IN SANTA FE, Rep.
LILLIE HAYWARD
Sole Screenplay FOLLOW ME QUIETLY, RKO
VICTOR HEERMAN
Joint Screenplay (with Andrew Solt and Sarah Y. Mason) LITTLE WOMEN, MGM
JACK HENLEY
Sole Story and Screenplay BLONDIE'S SECRET, Col.
LUCILLE HENLEY
Sole Story and Screenplay BLONDIE'S BIG DEAL, Col.
ARTHUR HOERL
Joint Screenplay (with Don Martin) and Sole Story JUNGLE JIM'S ADVENTURE, Sam Katzman Prod.
JOSEPH HOFFMAN
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Lou Breslow) AN INNOCENT AFFAIR (Nassour Prod.) U.A.
BROWN HOLMES
Sole Screenplay LOSER TAKE ALL, Col.

K

GINA KAUS
Joint Adaptation (with Monckton Hoffe) JULIA MISBEHAVES, MGM
ROSE KREBS
Sole Story and Screenplay BATTLING MARSHALL, Western Attractions, Inc.
HARRY KURNITZ
Joint Screenplay (with Philip Rapp) HAPPY TIMES, WB

L

ARTHUR LAURENTS
Sole Screenplay CAUGHT, Enterprise Prod.
ROBERT LIBOTT
Joint Story and Screenplay (with Frank Burt) THE LAW OF THE BARBARY COAST, Col.
Joint Screenplay (with Frank Burt) AIR HOSTESS, Col.
MARY LOOS
Joint Screenplay (with Richard Sale) MOTHER IS A FRESHMAN, Fox
SHERMAN L. LOWE
Sole Screenplay and Joint Story (with Royal K. Cole) PAROLE, Eagle-Lion
WILLIAM LUDWIG
Joint Screenplay (with Harry Ruskin and Arthur Wimperis) JULIA MISBEHAVES, MGM

M

JOEL MALONE
Joint Story (with Harold Swanton) A DATE WITH MURDER (Falcon Prod.) Film Classics
LARRY MARCUS
Sole Story and Joint Screenplay (with Ben Roberts and Ivan Goff) SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY, WB
AL MARTIN
Character Basis RUSTY SAVES A LIFE, Col.
DON MARTIN
Sole Story THE CREEPER (Reliance Prod.) Fox
Sole Screenplay A DATE WITH MURDER, (Falcon Prod.) Film Classics
Joint Screenplay (with Arthur Hoerl) JUNGLE JIM'S ADVENTURE, Sam Katzman Prod.
SARAH Y. MASON
Joint Screenplay (with Andrew Solt and Victor Heerman) LITTLE WOMEN, MGM
BERTRAM MILLHAUSER
Sole Story WALK A CROOKED MILE (Edward Small Prod.) Col.
STEPHEN MOORE
Story and Screenplay THE RETURN OF PAL, (S), RKO

N

JACK NATTEFORD
Joint Story (with Luci Ward) THE MIS-SOURIANS, Rep.
FRANK S. NUGENT
Joint Screenplay (with Laurence Stallings) THE THREE GODFATHERS, Argosy Pictures

In this listing of screen credits, published monthly in THE SCREEN WRITER, the following abbreviations are used:
COL—Columbia Pictures Corporation; E-L—Eagle-Lion Studios; FOX—20th Century-Fox Film Corporation; GOLDWYN—Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.; MGM—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios; MONO—Monogram Pictures Corporation; PAR—Paramount Pictures, Inc.; PRC—Producers Releasing Corporation of America; REP—Republic Productions, Inc.; RKO—RKO Radio Studios, Inc.; ROACH—Hal E. Roach Studio, Inc.; UA—United Artists Corporation; UNI-INT'L—Universal-International Pictures; UWP—United World Pictures; WB—Warner Brothers Studios. (S) designates screen short.

P

KENNETH PERKINS
Joint Screenplay (with Art Arthur) SONG OF INDIA, Gibraltar Pictures

STANLEY PRAGER
Sole Story and Screenplay JOE PALOOKA IN THE BIG FIGHT, Mono.

R

PHILIP RAPP
Joint Screenplay (with Harry Kurnitz) HAPPY TIMES, WB

BEN ROBERTS
Joint Screenplay (with Larry Marcus and Ivan Goff) SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY, WB

SAMUEL ROECA
Joint Screenplay (with Fred Niblo, Jr.) INCIDENT, Mono.

JACK ROSE
Joint Screenplay (with Melville Shavelson) TWO GUYS AND A GAL, WB

FRANCIS ROSENWALD
Joint Story (with Anthony Mann) FOLLOW ME QUIETLY, RKO
Sole Story and Screenplay STRIKE IT RICH, Jack Wrather Prod.

LOUISE ROUSSEAU
Sole Story AIR HOSTESS, Col.

HARRY RUSKIN
Joint Screenplay (with William Ludwig and Arthur Wimperis) JULIA MISBEHAVES, MGM

S

RICHARD SALE
Joint Screenplay (with Mary Loos) MOTHER IS A FRESHMAN, Fox

CHARLES SCHNEE
Joint Screenplay (with Robert Blee) BITTER VICTORY (Hal Wallis Prod.) Par.

MELVILLE SHAVELSON
Joint Screenplay (with Jack Rose) TWO GUYS AND A GAL, WB

BARRY SHIPMAN
Story and Screenplay SMOKY MOUNTAIN MELODY, Col.
Story and Screenplay SINGIN' SPURS, Col.
Story and Screenplay THE ARKANSAS SWING, Col.

SOL SHOR
Sole Story and Screenplay SONS OF ADVENTURE, Rep.

CHARLES SHOWS
Sole Story and Screenplay THE GNU LOOK, (S) (Jerry Fairbanks) Par.

EARLE SNELL
Sole Story and Screenplay ELDORADO PASS, Col.
Sole Story and Screenplay DESERT VIGILANTE, Col.

ANDREW SOLT
Joint Screenplay (with Sarah Y. Mason and Victor Heerman) LITTLE WOMEN, MGM

LAURENCE STALLINGS
Joint Screenplay (with Frank S. Nugent) THE THREE GODFATHERS, Argosy Pictures

HAROLD SWANTON

Joint Story (with Joel Malone) A DATE WITH MURDER (Falcon Prod.) Film Classics

T

MAURICE TOMBRAGEL
Sole Screenplay THE CREEPER, (Reliance Prod.) Fox

JACK TOWNLEY
Story and Screenplay RIDIN' THE OLD PINE TRAIL (Gene Autry Prod.) Col.

HARRY TUGEND
Joint Screenplay (with George Wells) TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME, MGM

W

LUCI WARD
Joint Story (with Jack Natteford) THE MISSOURIANS, Rep.

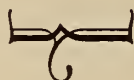
M. COATES WEBSTER
Sole Story and Screenplay RENEGADES OF SONORA, Rep.

GEORGE WELLS
Joint Screenplay (with Harry Tugend) TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME, MGM

BRENDA WEISBERG
Sole Screenplay RUSTY SAVES A LIFE, Col.

THAMES WILLIAMSON
Sole Screenplay THE MISSOURIANS, Rep.

ARTHUR WIMPERS
Joint Screenplay (with William Ludwig and Harry Ruskin) JULIA MISBEHAVES, MGM





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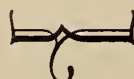
The Screen Writer.
Gentlemen:

As a scout for Houghton Mifflin Co., I am interested in seeing manuscripts of novels or non-fiction of general interest. Houghton Mifflin is the publisher of such current books as Ben Ames Williams' *House Di-*

vided, Ross Lockridge's *Raintree County*, Cornelia Otis Skinner's *Family Circle*, Winston Churchill's *The Gathering Storm*. I should be glad to consult on any book projects or manuscripts either by mail, or in person. Please communicate with me through Miss Penneman of the Screen

Writers Guild, or direct, care of Dept. of English, Stanford Univ., Stanford, Cal. I shall be in Hollywood for personal consultation from time to time, on dates of which Miss Penneman will be informed.

Sincerely yours,
Richard Scowcroft



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Vote for this New Board

In the approaching year, which will require the negotiation of a new contract, the Screen Writers' Guild stands in greater need than ever of officers and an executive board who represent its wide variety of professional interests and whose loyalty to the Guild must be unquestioned and uninfluenced by other considerations.

We therefore strongly urge the election of the following candidates:

PRESIDENT:

X George Seaton

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

X Oliver H. P. Garrett

X Don Hartman

X Wells Root

SECRETARY:

X Karl Tunberg

TREASURER:

X Valentine Davies

EXECUTIVE BOARD:

X Edmund Beloin

X Warren Duff

X Richard English

X Erwin Gelsey

X Edmund L. Hartmann

X Karl Kamb

X Milton Krims

X Gladys Lehman

X Winston Miller

X Richard Murphy

X Sloan Nibley

X Leonard Spigelgass

X Dwight Taylor

X Wanda Tuchock

X M. Coates Webster

These candidates represent a combination of long experience and the new blood of which the Guild stands in need for the guidance of its future affairs.

It is to be understood that our endorsement has not been sought by these candidates. They are committed to no prearranged program; they are free to act as their consciences and their judgment dictate, and are bound by no promises or commitments.

This public endorsement is volunteered because we feel that the very existence of the Guild depends on making the right choice in this election, and we, the undersigned, members of the Guild, acting entirely as individuals, feel that this is the right choice.

Robert Ardrey
D. D. Beauchamp
Martin Berkeley
Claude Binyon
DeWitt Bodeen
Charles G. Booth
Marvin Borowsky
Charles Brackett
Richard L. Breen
Betty Burbridge
Jerome Cady
Myles Connolly
Olive Cooper
Isabel Dawn
Chester Erskine
Paul Gangelin
Howard J. Green

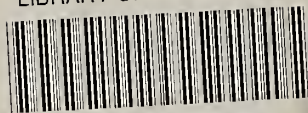
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Victor Hammond
F. Hugh Herbert
Lionel Houser
Agnes C. Johnston
Laura Kerr
John Larkin
Jonathan Latimer
Emmet Lavery
Erna Lazarus
Leonard Lee
William Ludwig
Dane Lussier
D. M. Marshman, Jr.
Elizabeth Meehan
Peter Milne
John Monks, Jr.
Jane Murfin

Dudley Nichols
Robert O'Brien
Walter Reilly
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Allen Rivkin
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